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CURRENT COMMENT.

It looks very much as if Mr. Harding's Administration were in for a stormy time with the next Congress. The new progressive Congressional bloc which was consolidated last week, even if it should accomplish nothing more, seems likely to make it considerably more difficult to give away public money surreptitiously than it has been in the past. Every proposed steal will in future, we expect, be thoroughly illumined for the public benefit by this bloc of dissenters; and this will have the excellent indirect effect of showing up our governmental system to its unfortunate victims, the underlying population, for exactly what it is. It can never be too clearly demonstrated that political government, whether it be vested in an autocracy, a constitutional monarchy, or a republic, is simply an instrument of exploitation, in the hands of a privileged class. The more strongly this is brought out, the sooner will be the breakdown of popular faith in political government. Moreover, the more friction there is among the parties in Congress, the harder the gentry who batten on the public through one form of subsidy or another, will have to work for what they get; and we were never in favour of letting anyone have something for nothing.

THE new bloc is largely representative of the farmers and of labour; and this may mean that a beginning has been made in occupational representation, or it may mean simply a new departure in class-representation. Time, and the way the bloc uses its power, will determine this. We should not find it in our hearts to blame these progressive brethren if they did undertake to push through a little class-legislation on behalf of farmers and workers; if we are to have class-legislation, why not pass it around? Thus far it has been pretty exclusively for the benefit of landowners, bankers, railway-operators and great industrialists; what is good for these gentlemen ought to be good for labourers and tillers of the soil. We do not for a minute believe that the progressive bloc would knowingly espouse class-legislation; yet it is possible that they might do so under the impression—with which, no doubt, the old-guard politicians also deceive themselves—that in benefiting a class they will be somehow benefiting the whole country. "Two things," said Bishop Wilson, "a Christian will do: first, never go against the best light he has; second, take care that his light be not darkness." The first of these the progressives do manfully; without the second they are likely—very likely—to do as much harm as good.

We are very happy to see that Mr. Malone, former Collector of the Port of New York, has made public the official record of the Lusitania's cargo on her last voyage. This document shows that the vessel carried no explosives except 4200 cases of small-arm ammunition, which is in conformity with a ruling made under Mr. Taft's Administration. The reports of the Lusitania's sinking led us to believe that she carried explosives. We could not account for certain circumstances in any other way, nor can we now. It is clearly possible, however, that these circumstances did not take place as represented. It appears quite possible, too, that a falsification of the manifest may have been made, and that part of the cargo billed as legitimate merchandise consisted of explosives. Our point is that while we do not regard Mr. Malone's statement as final, and hope that no one else will so regard it, we accept it provisionally, and we believe that it represents absolute good faith on the part of Mr. Malone. We think that it throws the burden of proof upon those who believe, as we did in all sincerity, that the ship carried explosives; and we trust that all available evidence on both sides of the case will be brought forward as speedily as possible, and discussed as dispassionately as possible.

PORTIONS of Attorney-General Daugherty's statement in reply to Representative Kellar, make an extremely unfavourable impression upon us. In moving for Mr. Daugherty's impeachment, Mr. Kellar cites fourteen grounds, including favouritism to certain corporations, refusal to prosecute upon information alleged to be competent, and persecution through criminal agents. These charges stand upon their merits; having made them, it is for Mr. Kellar to substantiate them and for the House of Representatives to take cognizance of them, if and when he does so; and then it is for Mr. Daugherty to meet them as best he may. If in advance of these proceedings Mr. Daugherty chooses to make a statement covering the legal aspects of the case, the only ground of objection is that of good taste and personal dignity. Mr. Daugherty, however, chose to include in his statement an aspersion upon the character of the proceedings against him and of those who are promoting it. This is mere scurrility, and we trust that the public will be quick to see that it is wholly out of place in Mr. Daugherty's reply. The charges against him are either true or not true. If they are true, he should take the consequences of his misfeasances; if they are not true, he should go free of them with full credit, and his detractors be made to take the responsibility. But vituperation and the impugning of motives can not assist justice in the premises, and we can only say that our general estimate of Mr. Daugherty is fully confirmed by his resort to them.

OCCASIONALLY in certain of our States there arises a great public agitation against some uncommon abuse of privilege, and pressure is brought on Congress to abate it. Finally, if the popular indignation is sufficiently strong, the lawmakers from the centres of pressure, with a great show of sound and fury, propose some remedial measure, with the understanding that it shall be blocked by those of their colleagues who hail from States that have not yielded to the current excitement. Apparently the so-called naval-limitation treaties concocted at the Washington conference have succumbed to an adaptation of this technique. Naval limitation is not a pressing popular issue in France or Italy, and it is in these two coun-

tries that the Governments show no disposition to secure a ratification of the papers signed at Washington with such a great flourish of moral trumpets. Accordingly the British Government has announced that the lid is off again, as far as naval construction is concerned. As we have pointed out, the treaties were not of any great importance, since they provided only for the scrapping of false teeth, but the fate of the documents is a significant instance of political hypocrisy.

Now that the Foreign Affairs' Committee of the French Chamber has refused to recommend the five-Power naval treaty, Secretary Denby comes along, prompt to the minute, with the demand for a navy "second to none." His report to Congress states that such a navy should and may be maintained under the provisions of the treaty. Well, rather!—as this paper pointed out at the time, there will be no trouble in the world about that. But Mr. Denby's proviso is purely academic, for the treaty is just so much waste paper, being unratified by France and Italy. We do not wish to harp on an embarrassing subject like the Washington conference, so we merely ask our readers to take note of these little developments in order to convince themselves that the same old game of naval competition goes on in the same old way. We suggest that they look up the newspapers of a year ago, especially those of the liberal persuasion, and reconsider the torrent of extravagance that was poured out over the achievements of the Washington conference, and then take note of the actual status of naval construction at the present time, and of its prospects as indicated in Secretary Denby's report and in the budget-figures of other major nations. That will be about all for the present, probably, but we shall continue to take note of these little happenings, as they happen to happen, and once in a while call our readers' attention to them.

AMERICAN taxpayers will not be unduly elated over the action of the Senate in refusing, by a slender margin, to pass the bill endorsed by Mr. Hughes and President Harding, providing for a five-million-dollar bonus to certain unknown bankers, speculators and politicians, under the guise of a loan to Liberia. The debate indicated that the bill failed, not primarily because it came within the category of political burglary, but because of an insuperable prejudice among certain Senators against the pigmentation of the Liberians. The purpose of the measure was fully exposed last summer by Senator Borah and others, who showed that under the agreement signed by Mr. Hughes about two-thirds of the "loan" was to be employed for the redemption at par of Liberian bond-issues which had been floated by American banking-firms and had been picked up by frugal and influential speculators at prices ranging as low as twenty cents on the dollar; while the remainder promised to be eaten up in short order by expensive American commissions to be employed in looking over the coloured brethren, and in particular by a staff of highly-paid American place-holders to be appointed, at salaries aggregating \$100,000, to supervise the Liberian revenues of \$163,000.

SINCE these facts had lain spread upon the pages of the *Congressional Record* for some months, it was curious to see Senator Shortridge and Senator Smoot making a tearful plea in the name of humanity, democracy and the like, for saddling these new obligations on the Liberian people. In his impassioned outburst for the suffering Liberians, Senator Smoot surpassed in melodramatic intensity even his own effort, a few months back, on behalf of the heroic beet-sugar interests, in which he owns a modest share. "I feel in my very soul and being that there is a moral obligation," he exclaimed hysterically, after opponents of the measure had been booting it about the chamber. Fortunately it proved to be a bad day for the Senator's peculiar brand of morality.

THE Americanism Commission of the American Legion is low in its mind about the extent of illiteracy in our great and glorious country. According to the 1920 census-

figures, six out of every hundred of our citizens are illiterate; but the army draft-tests revealed that about one American out of every four of cannon-fodder age could neither read nor write, and the members of the Americanism Commission properly take the view in the circumstances that the census-takers were unduly optimistic. Even with the census-figures as a basis, virtually every country in Northern Europe shows a higher degree of literacy than our own democratic home of the brave. This is humiliating, and the Legionaries have accordingly undertaken the worthy task of sweeping illiteracy from our midst in the next five years. A prosaic but practical method would be to devote less attention and money to legislation in the interest of privilege and puritanism; to cut down the huge appropriations for the machinery of mass-murder; and to invest equivalent energy and treasure in the effort to establish a social order in which a maximum of education would be accessible to all. The Americanism Commission is of a more romantic turn of mind, however, and its chief remedy is totally to prohibit immigration for five years. To cultivate literacy by excluding members of more literate civilizations than our own, is an odd scheme. Indeed it is so illogical that we feel that the members of the Americanism Commission ought to be in Congress.

ALTHOUGH we do not belong to the blessed fellowship of the Americanizers, we are not exactly in sympathy with the decision of the Supreme Court which denies to citizens of Japan the right to become naturalized in these United States. We personally have never been moved to go out and convert the aliens in this country, and bring them into the all-American camp; but on the other hand, we are not at all disposed to deny to the strangers in our midst anything that they may happen to want in the way of citizenship, culture, and so forth. We have not wasted any time evangelizing the Europeans, or protecting ourselves against the Orientals; instead, we have tried to learn a little something from them all; and we can not see that either we ourselves, or the aliens with whom we have come in contact, have suffered very much by this free and easy method of procedure.

SOME of our friends in the South may be surprised and pained to learn that the United States is beginning to figure in Europe as a kind of world-centre of Negro activities. The Chamber of Commerce at Hamburg, Germany, is circulating a report to the effect that hundreds of Negro agitators from this country are preaching black nationalism in Africa and are distributing among the mission Negroes a book printed in America called "The Gospel of the Black Race." Again, the Third International at Moscow has proclaimed the United States "the centre of the Negro culture of the world," and has decided that the Communist attack upon the Negro problem should be concentrated upon this country. These two items of news serve to emphasize the fact that the treatment accorded to the Negro in the United States has a more than national significance. If we in America want to promote another of those divisive movements which never can bring freedom and a full life, even to a dominant people, we have only to see to it that the Negro is excluded from a full share in the common life and the common culture of the country. In this situation it is perfectly natural that the Negro should develop racial interests which are not only different from those of his neighbours, but in conflict with them.

In the ideal nation of the nationalists' dreams, there is room for just one kind of people; in Czecho-Slovakia, for instance, there is no place for the Germans, just as in Austria-Hungary there was no place for the Czechs. One-fourth of the population of the new Republic is German, but a German member of the parliament complains that the Czechs take no account of that fact; they say, "*L'état, c'est nous.*" This deputy says that the Germans want a large measure of autonomy within the frame of the State; but so long as the national ideal dominates the Germans themselves, as well as the Czechs, autonomy

for the group can hardly assure freedom for the individual. Somehow the representatives of suppressed minorities never get around to criticize the whole concept of nationalism; they never seem to understand that in the nationalist's ideal nation, every individual who varies from type is, all by himself, a suppressed minority.

In general, our opinion of the public policy of the French Government is about as unfavourable, and about as frankly expressed, as the judgment which Molière's *Misanthrope* pronounces upon the poetry of Oronte. We should like to change our tune, just once, for the sake of variety, but our friends will not give us the chance. The other day, for example, the Associated Press reported that the French Government was about to retire from the shipping-business, after having accumulated a deficit of one billion francs, and hired out at five francs a year certain vessels which cost twenty-seven million francs each to build. The lesson was dearly bought, but it seemed to have been well learned, and we were all ready to bring out an expression of heartiest approval, when our eye fell upon another dispatch, this time a special to the *New York Globe*, which said that although public ownership had been abandoned, the Government would continue to subsidize the private shipping-companies. These tidings reduced us once more to the mood of the *Misanthrope*, and we felt that if Alceste had lived in a world of politicians, he might not have postponed his retirement into the desert until the end of Act V.

SEVEN years ago, the Sultan Abdul Hamid II passed over to the high harem of heaven, leaving to his heirs a monopolist's title to agricultural and mineral lands which are now valued at a billion dollars or so. The Young Turks had deposed Abdul in 1909; the Mesopotamian region, where the most valuable of his old claims were located, has since been detached from the political control of Turkey; and recently the Nationalists have decreed the abolition of the monarchic form of government. Thus the political scene has been shifted and reset, and the power of the Sultanate has apparently been lost in the shuffle. However, the papers tell us that eighteen of Abdul Hamid's twenty-two heirs have now turned over to a group of British and American financiers all their claims to the private domain of the old Sultan. The financiers are providing funds to grubstake some of the indigent princes and princesses, to pay taxes on the lands, and to defray the expenses involved in establishing title to the royal heritage.

OTHER American and English concerns, such as the Standard Oil Company, are apparently trying to grab off these same holdings, and especially those located in Mesopotamia, without having previously compounded with the Ottoman nobilities, or arranged to maintain them in the style to which they are accustomed. The American Government is out for freedom and democracy in Mesopotamia, which means simply that it favours those particular American concessionaires who have gone ahead in disregard of the claims of the Sultan's heirs. In this complex situation, the one obvious fact is that several competing groups of monopolists are trying to restore the Sultanate; that is, they are trying to establish themselves as the economic successors of the Sultan, and therefore as the heirs to the reality and the solid substance of his power. Superficially the substitution of a Western corporation for an Oriental monarch is something of a transformation; but the more things change in this way, the more they are the same.

WHAT is the perfect legislator? We note that he is defined after a fashion in a curious advertisement which appeared in the London *Nation* a few days before the recent British elections. The advertisement was published by a Bond Street tailoring-firm, but, possibly following the precedent set in other days by certain gentry of the shears in Tooley Street, it devotes itself to political rather than sartorial argument, and the fashion offered

is distinctly in the Tory mode. "No sane man could vote for the Labour party," the argument concludes, "and only a madman could vote for any member of the old gang under the label of a new party. The man to vote for is the ostensibly honest candidate belonging to any other party, who can be depended upon to do nothing but to keep quiet and sleep peacefully in the House of Commons." This slumbering-dummy creation is probably as good a political model as any, and we congratulate Messrs. Pope and Bradley on the cut of their offering. Apparently they gauged the popular taste, for the Government benches, or perhaps we should say cots, in the House, seem to be supporting an unusually large quota of sleeping beauties, and, appropriately enough, at the head of the Cabinet, the Mad Hatter has been succeeded by the Dormouse.

News as she is made! A dispatch of 22 November, in the *New York World*, carries the head-lines, "Moscow Anxious for U. S. Relations." The sub-title is, "Would Repair Error of Rejecting American Inquiry, and Take Initial Steps." The dispatch begins by saying, "That the Soviet Government is highly desirous of repairing the error made last August, when it rejected an American inquiry into Russian conditions, is again shown by an exclusive statement made to the *World* by George Chicherin." Here is the text of the statement: "We are extremely desirous of entering into relations with America. We are willing to take the initial step, but naturally we want some indication that there will be a favourable response. We have always said mutual trade-delegations were desirable. Whatever after-claims America has, such as those of the National City Bank, the Singer Sewing Machine Company and the McCormick Reaper concern, will be adjusted. Every one who has been in Moscow, of course, knows our guarantees of the sanctity of contracts. Our civil code contains all necessary legal machinery for the resumption of trade." Now, just what is there in that statement to justify the assumptions in the *World's* head-line and in the correspondent's exordium?

THE PEOPLE'S LEGISLATIVE SERVICE, we learn, is in need of funds wherewith to finance its work during the next couple of years. The Service was established two years ago, and its function is to supply those congressmen and senators who are interested in that sort of thing, reliable information concerning the nature and scope of legislation introduced, and its probable effect upon the public interest. Its staff of experts gathers and puts into usable form facts and figures bearing upon proposed legislation, and these the embattled legislators may use in their fight for or against that legislation. This is a useful service. No legislator, working unaided, can hope to inform himself concerning the great number of questions that come before Congress in the course of a session; for those questions cover a range of subjects as wide as the range of the country's economic and political interests. The Legislative Service has already been instrumental in saving the taxpayers some hundreds of millions. The minimum of fifty thousand dollars for which it is now asking, is an infinitesimal fraction of that saving, and, we think, might be subscribed simply as a good investment, by those who pay so large a share of their earnings, directly and indirectly, into the bottomless coffers of government. The address of the People's Legislative Service is 605 Fendall Building, Washington, D. C.

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It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either as to substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

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TOPICS OF THE TIME.

GAZING ON THE GREAT.

IF the Imperial Wizards, Grand Goblins, King Kleagles and other piggly-wiggles of the Ku Klux Klan should attempt to draw up a list of the ten greatest men in history, the result would perhaps not be very different from that recently achieved by three-quarters of a million members of the Epworth League. The League is an organization of the youthful associates of the Methodist-Episcopal Church in this country. By and large, its members have all the characteristics of the social group whose isolation and supremacy the Klan seeks to establish and maintain; that is, besides being Protestants, most of the Leaguers are native-born, white, Gentile Americans, and hence their judgment in this matter of the ten greatest men is perhaps roughly representative of that which would be brought out by a poll of the native-white, Gentile, Protestant, American population as a whole. The self-revealing plebiscite of these seven hundred and fifty thousand young people therefore merits the attention of anyone who is interested in the status of civilization in the United States.

The members of the Leaguers' pantheon, in the order of preferment, are: Thomas Alva Edison, Theodore Roosevelt, William Shakespeare, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Herbert Hoover, Charles Dickens, John J. Pershing, David Lloyd George and Andrew J. Volstead. The list as it stands is as queer a one as we have ever seen in all our born days; and a close analysis hardly tends to dispel the impression that there is something decidedly wrong with the group of voters whose opinion is here registered. If we consider first the activities represented by this assortment of heroes, we find that public affairs come first, with six names; literature follows, with three; science (or invention) furnishes one; architecture, sculpture, painting and music go begging, as does philosophy; and religion does not call out a single name—not even that of a Protestant like Luther or Calvin, or a good Methodist like Wesley. In the matter of distribution in time, we discover that six of the greatest men belong to the present or the immediate past, three are of the nineteenth century, and only one lived in an earlier era. The showing in the matter of nationality is even more impressive, for we find that there are six Americans and four Englishmen, with not a single name to represent all the ages of thought and action in Asia and on the continent of Europe.

In sum, then, the Epworthians have fixed the centre of the world's greatest achievements in the public affairs of the United States to-day. Within the limits that have thus been set, in history, in geography, and in the qualitative range of activities, no one could possibly choose a representative list of the world's great men; and yet the voters in this plebiscite have not realized the possibilities even of this limited field. The selection of Andrew J. Volstead as a running-mate for William Shakespeare is something worse than a joke.

If we were Klansmen of high degree, we should doubtless be gratified by the spatial, temporal and qualitative narrowness of interest exhibited in the plebiscite of the seven hundred and fifty thousand. We should feel that however much the native-white, Gentile, Protestant, American populace might be in danger of future contamination by

alien peoples, it had thus far been providentially guarded against the plague—at least where ideas are concerned. If we were Klansmen, we should feel that the prime need of a people so much concerned with local, temporary and superficial interests, is a tight quarantine against every external influence. However, since we have not yet put our head inside the Klan's sacred flour-sack, we do not feel obliged to subscribe to any of these beliefs.

A DANGEROUS PRECEDENT.

DOUBTLESS the public has been considerably elevated by the high quality of moral indignation which politicians in Europe and America have displayed over the recent execution by the present Greek Government of six former members of the Greek Cabinet. We have seldom witnessed a more pious outburst. The British Government dramatically broke relations with Athens as soon as the news of the executions became known. Anonymous spokesmen of our State Department at Washington gave voice appropriately to horrified condemnation. In Italy, where a new Government has recently established itself after many months of preliminaries in the way of arson and murder, the disapproval was particularly emphatic. The Greek affair was denounced in the Fascist press as "a barbarous massacre" and the gentle-hearted M. Mussolini threatened to break off relations with Greece.

All this Christian sentiment is pleasant to record, but to those with memories it will seem not a little remarkable. When the Horthy Government came into power in Hungary, members of the deposed regime who were unable to escape over the borders, speedily came to look upon a quick execution as the best of all possible dispensations. The Horthy terror extended to the murder or mutilation of such minor functionaries under the old Government as schoolteachers and postmen. There is the record of a petty officer of the Horthy army who personally murdered forty-two political prisoners in a single day. Yet none of the Western Governments expressed any dissatisfaction about these crimes. They discreetly looked the other way. Similarly, some months previously, they had evinced no interest when the Finnish White Guard Government, established with the aid of German bayonets, was turning Finland into a shambles. Some of the English newspapers were publishing photographs showing whole streets choked with the corpses of those who had been executed, but the various Governments were moved to make no unfavourable representations in the matter. In fact they received the leaders of the Finnish Government amiably at Versailles.

British statesmen who unleashed the black-and-tans on the Irish people and employed airplanes and machine-guns to shoot down gatherings of Egyptians suspected of taking seriously the British declarations for the self-determination of small nations, have expressed uncommon moral indignation over the legal murders in Greece. Yet it is not long since Mr. Lloyd George carried an election on the slogan of "Hang the Kaiser"; and Wilhelm, like the deceased Greek statesmen, had lost a war. Had he won, of course no British statesman would have proposed hanging him. Moreover, a few days before the affair in Greece, a former officer of the Irish Government had been executed at England's very doorstep, though his friends at the time were seeking to bring his case up for appeal in the

higher courts. No member of the present British Government, or of any former British Government, took any steps, as far as we are aware, to avert this outrage, and no moral indignation was expressed about it.

All this is a bit confusing. There has been an uncommon lot of governmental violence and lawlessness throughout Europe in the past few years. Apparently in some cases it is to be condoned, in others it is reprehensible and barbarous. Perhaps we can discover a rule for the correct attitude towards such matters. When the victims of official murder are Egyptian or Irish patriots, obviously the proprietaries call for no moral indignation, for patriotism is an exclusive prerogative of the major nations. When, as in the case of the victims of M. Mussolini's followers, or in the case of the Finnish White Guard Government, the victims are merely socialists, the whole matter may conveniently be ignored by all right thinkers; and when, as in Hungary, the attention of the Government is directed to shuffling off communists, the effort is worthy of discreet praise. The morality of political murder is plainly a variable quantity. The crime of the Greek Government is that it executed a set of old-fashioned politicians who, according to the rules that obtain throughout civilization, should have been permitted to hang about until in the course of time their turn came to enjoy again the privileges and emoluments of the public crib. The affair sets an alarming precedent. Hence we discover a reason for the moralistic protests of politicians in all countries, who had no words of pity to waste upon the scores of thousands of Greek citizens whose bones lie in the sands of Asia Minor as a result of the drab adventure in political imperialism begun by the highly respectable M. Venizelos and continued by the six who were shot.

A HORRID MURDER.

RICARDO FLORES MAGON, humanitarian philosopher, was permitted to die in Leavenworth prison the other day after serving nearly five years of the 21-year sentence imposed on him under our Espionage Law. Magon was less fortunate than Mr. Charles W. Morse, in that he never employed the powerful Mr. Harry M. Daugherty to pull strings for him. Magon was also unfortunate in that he was not a mere swindler, but had been put away for the heinous crime of expressing an opinion. Mr. Daugherty conceives it his official duty to protect American innocence against opinions, and he was Magon's jailer. Repeatedly persons interested in Magon called Mr. Daugherty's attention to the fact that the prisoner was dying, but Mr. Daugherty invariably maintained that he was in the pink of health, just as, some years ago, he demonstrated that his client, the wealthy Mr. Morse, who is still doing business at the old stand, could not live a month.

Magon was a Mexican. Under the Diaz tyranny he conceived the curious idea that political government was a doubtful blessing. He was driven into exile and naturally sought refuge in this "land of the noble free," as the hopeful bard expressed it. Strangely enough, even after living under our eighteenth-century political system, he was not inclined to change his mind about political government, but, in his little periodical, *Regeneracion*, published in Spanish in California, he continued to express his hopes of a social order under which, to quote his own words, "there will not be babies whining for milk, there will not be women selling their charm for a crust of bread; com-

petition and enmity will give way to co-operation and love among human beings." Our patient authorities permitted the fellow to publish vicious nonsense of this character until we sallied forth to make the world safe for democracy, and then, of course, his blasphemies could no longer be tolerated, and he was clapped into jail for twenty-one years.

Occasionally, during the past few months, some citizen of doubtful respectability would visit the Department of Justice to request that Magon be deported, since the present Mexican Government had asked for his release and had even voted him a pension. With one of Mr. Daugherty's servants of justice approximately the following colloquy would take place: "Of all the political prisoners his case will be considered last. He is a bad anarchist." "What is a bad anarchist?" "He does not believe in organized government." "But the man is dying." "Our reports do not show it. He is well enough to be unrepentant. He refuses to change his views." Probably the miscreant's health would have improved, if he had embraced more salutary opinions. How much better it would have been had he yielded and come to the warden, crying: "From what I see of its processes hereabouts, I am convinced that political government is perfectly lovely!" But Magon was hopelessly obstinate. He died, possibly out of a wicked desire to cheat the prison-records, and it is to be hoped that his fate will be a warning to all young persons who are tempted to hold opinions. It is noteworthy that in Mexico the members of the Chamber of Deputies draped the Speaker's rostrum in mourning, thus proving beyond peradventure that such barbarians are not fit to control valuable oil-fields.

CAMP-MEETING EXEGESIS.

IF a Government sets out to be something more than an efficient instrument of administration, and if its personnel, by oral and written messages to the public, hold themselves up as mentors, preachers and prophets, the natural impulse is to compare the acts of such a Government with its exhortations, so as to ascertain whether its words or its deeds represent its intentions.

With no desire to exalt Messrs. Arthur, Garfield, Cleveland, Harrison and McKinley—to name some Presidents easily within the memory of men who are in their fifties—it may be said for those constitutional leaders that, in general, their addresses to the nation adhered to the rubric of their office. The rôle of evangelist was added to the presidential repertoire when Theodore became consul; and its ultimate resources were sounded out by the New Jersey Messiah. Somehow, in retrospect at least, these mimes were amusing enough because of the personal characteristics which shone through their conceptions of their part. It can not be gainsaid that they were men of marked individuality; and, after all, an actor is distinguished not alone by the ability to make the imaginary seem real, but by the capacity to convey to the observer a sense of a creative interpreter underneath the stroller's tunic.

When, however, bland ethical preachments or threats of hell-fire come to one's ears with a slight unnatural rasping sound, and a depression from the key suggestive of a reproducing-machine that has been bought at auction-sale, all possible interest in the words themselves vanishes. Camp-meeting exegesis is all very well in its place, and those whose spiritual circulation demands such stimulus know where to search for it; but the White House, failing to be wise, should either be funny or silent.

Mr. Harding is neither. The same is true of his men servants, his maid servants, his oxen and his asses, who, as in every Administration, take on the protective coloration of the leader to whom they owe their places. The Secretaries are neither funny (though sometimes ridiculous) nor silent. The under- and under-under-secretaries are neither funny nor silent. Consider the solemn Messrs. Mellon, Hughes, Weeks; the egregious Messrs. Denby, Daugherty, Roosevelt!

High professions of democracy and other ideals of a free people on the one hand; and cunning, shabby deeds on the other—which are we to trust? A traveller from Altruria reading the slushy hypocrisy from official pens about the Philippines, Santo Domingo and our other dependencies taken by force, and then investigating the Government's record in colonial administration, would be bewildered by the discrepancy. Again, though in his innocence he might fail to discern the smear of the worst modern merchandising-methods in the expensive newspaper-publicity of the United States Shipping Board, conducted by a former professional user of space in periodicals, he would wonder that a Government has to help on its competition with privately-owned passenger-steamers by means of overwhelmingly heavy advertising. The Altrurian would certainly be shocked at the Government's enthusiastic urging of Americans to travel on the Continent on the ground that the favourable rate of exchange makes living in Europe more advantageous than in the States! He might understand the emigration of disabled British soldiers to the Continent, where one can make ends meet on one pound a week, but he would have reason for astonishment if Mr. George's Government or Mr. Bonar Law's actually advised its nationals to spend the weekly pound sterling in Germany for the reasons that the Harding-Hughes-Lasker Shipping Board puts before Americans in the daily papers. We face the spectacle of a governmental bureau spending huge sums of the taxpayers' money to induce taxpayers to live abroad, merely that the decrepit enterprise in which the Government is engaged may get the few dollars of passage-money! The actual immorality of using the abnormal exchange-rate as a bait, of encouraging the consumption of food that would otherwise find its way to European mouths, is too obvious to demand more than mere mention.

An aspect of the question which we commend to students of public affairs is the possible influence which the Shipping Board's methods may have on editorial opinion. How many of the papers which carry the Shipping Board's seductive announcements are paying editorial attention to the Board's business policies? We do not refer to the larger journals whose intrinsic value as advertising-mediums, judged by current business standards, make them independent of any archaic system of polite bribery, but to the average paper whose editors sneeze when the counting-room takes snuff. What proportion does the cost of newspaper, magazine and other advertising bear to the Shipping Board's total overhead expense? It would be interesting to read the statistics of this matter; doubly interesting since we live under an Administration whose appointment of the profane and uninteresting Mr. Dawes was a gesture of economy which deceived only the few optimists who are ready to credit every new broom with the ability to sweep clean.

“UTTERLY DAMNED OLD MEN.”

As one who had read the discourse of Homenas upon the divine decretals could never be taken in by the evangelical eloquence of Mr. Wilson, so, it seems to us, no person who has ever read Henry George's chapter, in “Progress and Poverty,” on “How Modern Civilization may Decline,” could ever be misled concerning the character and conduct of officeholders at this period of our national history. There are certain things in literature whose greatest value is that which Goethe attributed to his own works: that they give one “a certain inward freedom”; and this is because they help us to achieve a viewpoint from which we may observe a whole complex order of social phenomena without being either confused or deceived. Such is certainly the value of Rabelais; such, in a very different way, is the value of Goethe; and such, in a still different way, is the value of Henry George. “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” It is the truth which each of these writers reveals that exercises such a liberating influence upon the minds of his readers.

Rabelais's method was satirical; he had no mercy upon hypocrites. The pretence which is used to gloss over and render tolerable so much that is reprehensible in the social life of any age or people, Rabelais peels off with neatness and deadly precision, and bares the ugly reality beneath. Goethe's function was not thus to expose shams, but to throw upon human relations, more especially in their cultural aspects, the light of an inspired common sense, so that we thereafter view those relations with a vision to some extent altered and informed by his profound wisdom. The method of Henry George was analytical, and his concern was with the problem of human existence. He reminded his generation of something that Christian civilization has rather wilfully ignored, that man is a land-animal, and that his spiritual welfare is dependent upon his physical well being. He showed, moreover, how the complex dislocations of our economic and social life, which have confused so many economists, are the effects of one fundamental and simple cause, namely: the denial to man of free access to the source of his subsistence. To regard George merely as the advocate of a method of taxation is as mistaken as it would be to regard Rabelais as a mere humorist or Goethe as a mere playwright. He was more than that; he was a philosopher and analyst.

All this is by way of a long preface to a short discussion of the deterioration that has been going on in the personnel of Government in this country during the past few decades. Franz Oppenheimer has somewhere remarked that a poor country is likely to have honest officeholders. This is natural; when a country offers no inducement to exploiters, its officeholders will have no need to serve as agents of a thieving privileged class; moreover, since officeholding will offer little in the way of easy money, it will not appeal to those who are out to make their money that way. In such a country, officials will be public servants merely; as they would be anywhere under a purely administrative system of Government. In the same way, a new and sparsely settled country will be likely, as Henry George has pointed out in the chapter we have cited, to have an honest Government, because the condition of men in such a country will tend to be about equal, since the land has not yet

been monopolized, and equality of opportunity still exists. In such a country, honest and able men will be attracted to public office, because they may serve there without sacrifice of self-respect. Later, when the function of government becomes more and more to perpetuate the inequalities which result from the progressive monopolization of natural resources, men of honesty and ability will be repelled by the character of the obligations which officeholding entails. As social inequalities become greater, therefore, government deteriorates; it becomes a thing of place-holders, of mediocrities, of crooks and confidence-men.

Such has been the history of this country. Officeholding before the Civil War was a relatively honourable occupation, and the United States produced, during that period, some able and admirable public men. Since the Civil War the honest, intelligent public servant has become more and more the exception; and since the Spanish-American War, which marked the beginning of our overseas imperialism, he has, with one or two notable exceptions, ceased to exist. We would not go so far as to say that there have been no honest public officials during the last few decades; there have been, although their number has certainly not been legion. Nor, on the other hand, would we maintain that there have been no intelligent officeholders during that period, for there have been a few. What we do contend is that the number of public officials who combine the qualities of honesty and intelligence has been growing fewer and fewer of late years; while the number who possess neither quality has been steadily increasing.

All this is going on precisely as Henry George foresaw it; he described it as accurately as if he had been writing after the fact instead of before it. Moreover, he showed how futile under such circumstances is a faith in the saving power of political democracy; how, indeed, "a Government of universal suffrage and theoretical equality may, under conditions which impel the change, most readily become a despotism. For there despotism advances in the name and with the might of the people." Certainly no one who has witnessed the course of government in this country since we entered the European war, can doubt the truth of that statement; and there were strong signs of despotism before that. The war did not create the tendency; it merely strengthened it. While Government is thus taking on a despotic nature; and penal laws, in consequence, and with the endorsement of an influential section of the populace, are growing more barbarous; those people who retain some faith in the forms of popular government are showing their dissatisfaction with this state of affairs in the only way open to them: the regular repudiation of the existing Administration at the polls. Others are organizing to promote the establishment of a new economic order; and these the Government persecutes with relentless ferocity because of their opinions.

Such, then, is the nature of our system of government at present. It is a corrupt, republican form of despotism; and its violence and lawlessness are increasing as the misery and restlessness of the underlying population increase. The facts are plain to anyone; but it is one thing to observe phenomena and another to know why they exist. Mr. Coolidge, himself an officeholder and with a belief in officeholders, looks upon the violent agitations of our social life and decides that they are the

result of too much prosperity. The liberal, who retains his faith in popular forms of government, looks upon the corruption of officialdom and decides that the individual officeholders are responsible; that we must "elect good men to office." What neither realizes is that the corruption of officeholders and the agitations in our social life go hand in hand, and that they are both the result of one fundamental cause, namely: expropriation and exploitation. As expropriation and exploitation progress, the masses will become more miserable and restless; and as the masses become more miserable and restless, the more violent will be the methods exercised by officeholders in their work of protecting the privileged few from the exploited many. When violence and corruption are required of officeholders, then only violent and corrupt men will take office. Henry George, writing in 1879, perceived the beginnings of the break-down which is now strikingly apparent in modern civilization; and how, if the cause were not removed, the conditions which at present confront us must develop from those beginnings. He was able to do this because he had a fundamental viewpoint upon social phenomena. He has set forth that viewpoint clearly and cogently; and we can recommend to those who are puzzled and confused by the present demoralization in our public affairs, no better touchstone by which to test them than that which is afforded by his works.

THE SYMBOL OF NIAGARA.

(Thoughts after reading recent books upon America.)

THUS we must leave America in the flight of appearances and apparitions, the pageantry and phenomena of our time—as in some swift-careering train we leave a mountain-range through whose tunnels and valleys we have just been whirled. We have bathed in flashes of sunlight, let the bright, dishevelled landscapes pour themselves into our souls; we have been plunged into cold shadows and sombre wildernesses. Released into the outer distances, we see the contours more clearly, and perhaps even the glow of dawn or sunset upon the peaks.

Or if the image of a mountain-range be too impersonal, let us leave America as we would leave a new Colossus, bestriding the New World from east to west. This Colossus, as we have observed, has feet of gold and iron, but as yet only a head of clay, cloudy, steaming, amorphous, not yet moulded into a clear face. Portentously appears this Titan in whose hands, Prometheus-like, the fire of freedom once burned.

But this Titan, or—since it is fit to use the feminine for America, the Land above all other lands, of the Woman—this Titaness, whose bronze symbol stands with extinguished torch on her star-shaped prison-pedestal at the entrance to New York harbour, can no longer bring liberty or enlightenment to others. She has, in fact, denied them to herself and to her children, and out of her house of refuge she has made a prison-house. The native and alien manipulators and hucksters of her destiny have tied her down with a thousand cords. Nevertheless still upright stands this Colossa, immense and formidable in mass and outline. But she is blind—or blinded. No veil of mysticism, racial, religious, dynastic or historical, encompasses her—as once the figure of the Russian Cyclops, toppled from his feet of clay. This giantess is of earth and metal. Her flesh is the flesh of machines, her breath elemental energy, her heart a furnace—but not an altar-fire. The law of her being, not of her becoming, is Production—the production of things. Her existence is use, her creed is pragmatism. She has become a monument not so much to man's aspiration towards freedom as to his mechanical genius, or ingenuity. She towers above the horizons of the world, a majestic statue, a vast organism, but as yet without a soul.

Having by injudicious and emotional intervention brought about the collapse of Europe, by the thrust of a brutal fist agitated by an alien will, she is herself once more betrayed—and shackled for a generation or more to the Gibraltar of English imperialism. Thus the great Mother of Use, the Prophetess of the Thing, herself became the Thing, the Tool, the Used One, and exemplified on a stupendous scale the subjection of matter to mind.

But all figures, even the mixed, and all symbols, even the

most patent, are false and feeble as a measure or a frame into which to press the incommensurable; and America is as incommensurable as life itself. Her glory and her meanness, her joy and the terror that arises from her, her shame and her insolence, her ignorance, her desperate fevers, her laughter of machines, the sibilance of her newspaper-hydras, her crass indifference and her impregnable assurance that makes hope itself seem like discouragement, are all accentuated and intensified by the torrential superabundance of this life that lashes her on, through the defiles of instinct and temperament to some far-off goal.

Measured by the values of vitality, she stands first, magnificent though mongrel, among the *young* nations of the world—America, Germany and Russia—as opposed, and by the same laws of vitality inimicably opposed, to the *old*, those whose biological course is running to a close, whose orbit of life and power is now a declining spiral.

But I am driven once more to take refuge in a metaphor, a symbol—one I once used to express America in a youthful and volcanic novel of epic dimensions, which still awaits the corrective hand—the symbol of Niagara. For America is Niagara—is full and overflowing life. He who would essay with naked eyes to outstare the lightning, or with naked hands to clothe the necks of the apocalyptic chargers, might make bold to hover and brood above the onset of these passionate, imperious waters, smooth and relentless as polished obsidian, yet fringed at the awful mouth with oracular foam, as they go rolling like an oceanic cataclysm into this tremendous and eternal vat. Let him hurl his questions into this chaos: "To what end? Wherefore and Whither?"

Perhaps, if he have the prophetic ear he will receive an answer:

"America is Action, and Action too, is an End in Itself!"

HERMAN GEORGE SCHEFFAUER.

HEBREW POETRY OF TO-DAY.

PSALMIST and prophet—such is the double rôle close to the heart of Israel; but in the recent revival of Hebrew literature it is the poet who has risen supreme. The earliest literature was largely propagandist. Verse was with Wessely (1785-1830) the medium for a defence of humanism, an attempt to enrich the Jewish tradition through the contributions of modern science. The work of Samuel D. Luzzatto was a glorification of the old religious ideals of a race that was contented, self-sufficient, beyond need of science. This view in turn gave rise to a social satire, pointing out the evils of the drudgery and superstition of the Ghetto.

A. B. Lebensohn (1794-1880) was the first among the Hebrew writers to be deeply moved with pity; yet his pity left room for scorn. "The Jew is held not by foreign enemies, but by the scribes," he proclaimed, as he launched his invectives against tradition. His son, Mica-Joseph Lebensohn (1828-1852), gave voice to the struggles of his people with even deeper feeling and greater artistry. He sings a personal song, the cry of a tender soul. His despair becomes, in Judah Leon Gordon (1830-1892), a fierce protest, the hopeless cry of an individual against the chains of ages. Gordon saw in the Jews "neither a people nor a congregation, but a flock of sheep," and the poetry that followed him was a return to lamentation over the miseries of Israel. A new hopefulness is voiced, however, by Dolitzky (1866) who, after the expulsion of fifty thousand Jews from Moscow, sang "The wings of my dream carry me to Zion." In all his poems one finds that dream of Zion. He even speaks to his love in figures of the Holy Land:

Your breasts rise from your bosom as the summits of the Mount of Zion above the land of beauty. Put forth your hand unto me, my beautiful Shulammitte; together we will go to the Orient, to the land of my desire. There I will plant you among sweet flowers, and my muse will be born into a new life, because of you.¹

¹Except for some of the quotations from Bialik (in which I have been assisted by Leo Auerbach), no attempt is made to preserve the rhythmic forms of the originals, which are in biblical prose, free verse or—most frequently—a definite metrical scheme.—J. T. S.

C. A. Shapiro, who lived as a Christian, was introduced to the court by Turgenev, and rose to be photographer to the Tsar. From his early days he cherished a bitterness that finally broke forth in revolt, like blind Samson crying, "Let me die with the Philistines":

Why does the lion feed upon hay?

In the blood of my wounded heart I have dipped my fingers; with fingers dripping blood I wake my lyre. By day I toil for a morsel of bread like a slave; by night, breadless, I sing like a prince.

In the blood of my wounded heart I have dipped my pen; this the ink that gives me power to write. By day I eat my poisoned bread; by night I drink the full glass of my tears.

In the blood of my wounded heart I have dipped my paper, that the red trace of my wounds may be marked thereon. Oh! the dogs that I loved, that I reared, that I favoured, under my table—they, they with their tongues have licked up the blood of my heart. . . .

The renewed anti-Semitism of 1881 brought forth a host of minor poets who preached the Exodus to Zion. Joseph Halévy finds hope in a return to the agricultural epoch; Naphtali Imber, in Palestine, sounded an inspiring note in "Hatikvah" (Hope), which became the Zionist anthem. In Sarah Shapiro there is a feminine delicacy: "It is not the dew nor the rain, it is our tears that water your mountainsides, O Zion. It is not fire nor the sun, it is our blood, O Zion, that reddens your skies!" Increasing despair is well expressed in the condensed autobiography of Rabbinoitch:

I had even become a grocer—and I swam in a sea of cares to bring a bit of dry bread to my little ones—but I was no less a poet. I sang at dawn, and when, hands soiled with naphtha and petroleum, furtively I penned my meditations—the eye of my wife surveyed me silently and I beheld the dumb reproach of her mouth: Will you ruin all our business? And I know that she is very right.

M. Mané, the best of this sorrowful group, found relief from his despair in his deep love of nature: "How superb you are, O pretty rose, with your ruddy veins of bluish pink, with your drops of dew that now are like tears shed from me, and now are like smiling eyes."

L. L. Perez, at first a mystic, violently attacked the tendency of the enlightened Hebrews towards assimilation; later he was captured by the symbolist movement in European poetry, and probably also by a Christian maiden. His work reveals the first strains of paganism, of eroticism, since the "Song of Songs." His "Flute" is the record of his love, ecstatic, tumultuous, jealous, troubled; finally resigning itself to any treatment:

The mysteries of the stars, of the heavens, are unveiled in your eyes, O my lovely one; I decipher the secret of the murmur of flowers in the honey drops that fall from your lips. When your tiny hand is on my head, the book of the past opens before me, and in the luminous glory of your azure eyes, I glimpse the end of the centuries. . . .

I shall never return to your home, O my lovely one. My moments of happiness there are terrible. It is not a luminous grace you spread among your guests; but it is my heart that you rend to divide with all the world. . . .

After the disastrous end of his suit, Perez became pessimistic. His later work has all been in Yiddish, in which tongue he is well-known as poet and playwright.

The group of modern Hebrew poets, grown out of the revolution of 1906, speaks with a new fire, an assurance, a personal and national dignity, that recall the days of the prophets. Jacob Cohen is the poet of the frail, the elegant, with no message, no intense burden of feeling, but a bubbling, intimate song.

I shall go into the fields, into the forest; I shall go forth.
I shall grow drunk with the voices of springtime, and the
voices of my heart will awaken. . . .

I shall sing with the musicians of the woods, those song-
sters of the reawakening; with the leaves, with the shadows,
I shall hold silent council.

Yet even in his seclusion he hears the outcries
of his people:

Do you know what the mountains are?
The mountains are cries—
Cries for freedom; wild cries of raging voices
Uprooted and breaking into mighty storms;
In a strong heart striving for dominion and space.
From the heart of mankind,
Breaking out and hurling themselves at heaven;
Now they are frozen.

For S. Schnaier life holds no illusions: it is a tor-
ment, with no prospect, no ideal. Yet he speaks
regally, pitting strength of mind against sham. He
dislikes the absolute, even in truth and in God. In
much of his work he reveals the weakness of Sam-
son; women are to him a ladder from hell to heaven,
on which one climbs up or down.

As Schnaier turns to Venus, so does the greater
poet Saul Tchernitchovsky (b. 1878) turn to Apollo
and to Pan. This Jew who grew up outside the
Ghetto, in Sunny Crimea, can not understand the
long submission of his race. His few poems on na-
tional themes reveal his impatience, but he is quick
to turn away from suffering to visions of beauty
and joy.

Are not tears strangers to me?

In one poem the youth pictures himself as a "Child
of the Earth," buried alive by Pharaoh, and risen
with the spring to help rescue Israel. He summons
his people to feast upon Nature, Nature who is
neither good nor just, but only beautiful:

A beautiful field, a beautiful tree—in them I behold God's form,
And on every high mountain He is hidden.
Where there is feeling of life, where there is flesh and blood,
In plant and stone is He personified. . . .

Nature, light and love are the three forces that
vivify his eager, impetuous verse.

There is a great hero in the world. His name is Sun.
Surely, the deeds of the Sun are great, and his works are
wonderful.

Let us rejoice, let us love, let us sing, let us taste happiness,
O my beloved; while the clouds have not darkened the
glorious light of our skies. While our faces are aflame,
while your heart and mine are ardent pyres, while youth,
the age of joy, is not pressing to leave, while the shadows
of night are not lengthening, while we aspire to life and
long for it, let us rejoice, let us love, let us taste happiness,
let us sing, O my beloved.

But there is in Tchernitchovsky neither the depth
of compassion which is revealed by all great spirits,
nor a complete understanding of his people, nor
even a rich fund of personal emotion. With him
joy seems to be ephemeral, but always renewed;
and he passes lightly from beauty to beauty and
from love to love.

Risen from the Ghetto, burning with its wrongs
and its desires, Chaim Nachman Bialik (b. 1873) is
the richest voice in Hebrew since the singers of the
Bible. In his attitude towards his race there is a
wholeness of vision heretofore lacking in Hebrew
writers. He has the discernment to see that the sal-
vation of the Jew as a race depends upon the reten-
tion of his ancient ideals, upon his proud conscious-
ness of his mission. As a poet, none the less, he
realizes that his people are floundering in a stag-
nant swamp of tradition; and his deep compassion

is tinged with pessimism. He regards with gloomy
eyes the attitude of the intelligent Hebrews, not be-
cause they are becoming enlightened, but because
they are discarding the peaceful ways of 1800 years
and becoming as savage and as vengeful as the
rest of the civilized world.

Because I have not betrayed my past, I have not accustomed
my hand to strike with criminal grasping, I am destined alone
to sing the song of Jehovah.

For that I suffer; they have wiped off my name from the
book of nations because I have not sullied it with slavery
and blood.

Bialik's poetry throbs with a compassion born of
the sorrows of his life, and is filled with a sympa-
thetic understanding of his people. His pictures
of Ghetto life are unsurpassed. The long narrative,
"The Student," reveals with deep pity the life of
one who is dedicated in youth to an outworn learn-
ing. "The Scroll of Fire," written in biblical prose,
pictures the two tendencies of his race, the bitterly
revengeful and the tenderly submissive.

Yet Bialik is not always the submissive. His
poems at the time of the revolution stir the spirit;
and "In the City of Slaughter," written after the
Kishinev massacre, is as savage as Jeremiah.

A groschen for a wound, a groschen for a wound,
A groschen for a violated daughter!
A groschen for a grandsire done to death,
And for a son, a boy just ripe for marriage!

Go, tramping pedlars, seek the field of victims,
And dig white bones from out your new-made graves,
And fill your baskets, every one his basket.
Go out into the world and drag them with you.
From town to town, wherever there's a market,
And spread them out before the strangers' windows
And sing hoarse beggar-songs, and ask for pity!
And beg your way, and trade as you have always
In flesh and blood, your own. . . .

But he always returns to softer moods though not
less sad. He writes of nature, but it is in her twi-
light hours that nature has the greatest hold upon
him. Like all his people, the poet yearns for the
many simple pleasures of which they are deprived.
The lad in the Ghetto begins his study at the age
of five, and all day long thenceforth his life is
steady toil. Where is his youth, his freedom? Mar-
riage is arranged by his family; where are the
spontaneous impulses of love?

Tuck me in under your wing.
Be a mother and sister to me.
Let your bosom my refuge be,
Where my lorn prayers cling.

Hearken, and hear my grief,
At dusk, in an hour of ruth:
They say there is youth in the world;
Where is my youth? . . .

I dreamed, and the stars betrayed
My eager call;
And now there is naught for me in the world,
Nothing at all.

Tuck me in under your wing,
Be a mother and sister to me.
Let your bosom my refuge be,
Where my lorn prayers cling.

Bialik has woven songs that will become part of
the permanent treasures of the world's literature,¹
as well as part of the poignant revelation of his
race. What lies ahead? Will the colony in Pales-

¹ Bialik's works have already been translated into Yiddish, Polish,
Russian, German, French and Italian.—J. T. S.

tine bring about a revival of Hebrew in speech as well as in writing? Politics plays too large and too subtle a part in the destiny of nations for anyone to prophesy overmuch concerning the future of Hebrew literature, but its mood is seen in these words of challenge and strength:

No! Poetry will never die! In frames of pure gold, in necklaces of rime, the enthusiasm of the spirit of the poet will leap forth, strong as the superb roaring of the sea.

JOSEPH T. SHIPLEY.

THE DECLINE OF GUSTO.

As I was reading over for the hundredth time that most valiant and jocund of books, Shelton's translation of Don Quixote, there swept over me, independent of the story or the characters, an overwhelming sense of life's enjoyment, of gusto in living, which no modern author has ever been able to invoke. The sensation was so persuasive that as I raised my eyes from the page, I seemed to behold a new and amazing glitter in the fire that was dubiously gnawing the green wood in my grate; I looked about me with a delighted wonder at all the familiar things in my room, as though some ghostly optician had slipped a pair of magic spectacles between me and the commonplace. Then gradually the enchantment waned; the fire resumed its toothless mumbling against the unedible logs; the walls of the room shrank around me again with the assurance of legitimate routine. What had happened? I reread the last passage: "Don Quixote rested marvellously admired at the goatherd's tale; and, with greater desire to know who that unfortunate madman was, purposed with himself, as he had already resolved, to search him throughout the mountains, without leaving a corner or a cave of it unsought until he had gotten him." Obviously, the incantation was not particularly in that sentence; it was the flavour of the whole work that had affected me so that when I happened to raise my eyes I saw the small world round me in the colours of romance.

It is not Shelton alone who wields this ineffable magic. One finds it in the other great Elizabethan translators, in Sir Thomas Urquhart, in William Adlington, in John Florio, and in the translators of the English Bible; and one finds it, of course, in all great poetry. Some have called it visualization; some, magic; some, overtones. Without claiming any superiority for my own term, I should call it gusto.

The Elizabethans were masters of gusto. Every ordinary detail of life becomes matter for high wonder under their pens. They were never bored and they were never hurried. Their lavish verbal delight in the least iota of existence would lead us to believe that in those days men were always tip-toe with "admiration," that the jolts along the pathway of routine were stepping-stones to great adventure, that routine itself was bordered with all kinds of interesting possibilities. Nowadays, routine has no such virtues; and even in the golden age of the Virgin Queen there must have been an occasional flat or morass. Yet looking back, one can see only a glittering array of amazing, breathless moments.

Part of the charm of the Elizabethan writers may be purely a matter of verbiage. English words were new from the mint then, and men were so content to turn them over and over in the sunlight, rejoicing in the varied flash and shine of the coin, that they clean neglected "to put them to prac-

tical use," as our business schools would say. Instead of rushing off to a metaphorical market and purchasing each syllable's worth of carefully weighed meaning, they piled them up extravagantly, ran their hands through them, and, like jugglers, tossed them up into the sparkling air. The Rabelaisian "catalogue" is well-known; I wonder if it is equally well-known that Urquhart, in his translation, at least doubled the length of those catalogues with a verbal delirium surpassing even that of the French master.

We are more efficient nowadays. We must get along with our story if we would please the financial department of our publisher. The characters in an Elizabethan book, whether it be in verse or prose, in the original or in a translation, live through their days with an air of sprightly leisure that has been relegated to the kingdom of the lost arts. In the morning, they rise up at dawn or with the sunlight; we get up. They seat themselves in carefully detailed order around the board and partake of meats, dainties, and vintages, all lovingly described; we eat. The comparison of meals, in fact, may serve as a symbol of the difference in the whole quality of their life and ours. Their literature, like their banquets, was hearty and elaborately intricate. Our literature resembles nothing so much as the food that we snatch from the counter of a cafeteria, where everything is set out in strict uniformity of kind and price.

Of course many a pedant has taken exception to the Elizabethan translations. They are not "faithful" enough to suit the literal-minded. Textually faithful they are not, certainly; but who cares two pins for a fidelity which exacts the laboured rendition of word for word, idiom for idiom? Any bright schoolboy does at least as well as that by Cicero and Virgil. Spiritually faithful they are, however, for the translators have Englished in sense and in spirit the foreign masterpieces that roused them to that rare and holy enthusiasm which begets labours of love; and surely any other method of translation is vain and ungainly, resulting only in such futilities as one finds in the Revised Version.

The fine art of gusto, then, is partly a matter of words. One would not wish, however, to advocate a return to obsolete speech. For though the fruit of gusto be words, the roots of the matter strike far down into the spiritual soil of an age. Our language has become tedious and slipshod because we ourselves are often bored and hurried. From a perusal of our literature, some future reader might well decide that we were an exhausted race without *joie de vivre*—hurrying through days, through months, through years, through lives; a race for which there seemed to be nothing in life except a swift onrush towards the end of it. That is the impression which one receives from the modern writers. The old neo-classic ideal of the unity of time was based on the reasonable assumption that no writer with gusto would wish to deal with more than twenty-four hours of life, since it would take at least a full-length drama to describe those adequately. In four-fifths of our modern fiction, ten years are covered in about three hundred pages, or two and one-half pages per month. While this method may not be wholly wrong, it has at least had the effect of destroying the fine art of gusto. The worst offenders among modern writers have become so mad and distracted in their haste that many of them have entirely abandoned the use of

sentences, contenting themselves with a few raw phrases torn from the carcass of a language which, if not dead, is certainly wounded sore.

What religion needs, said a philosopher, is a new incarnation. The same may justly be said of this tremendous and lovely mystery which we call the English language. It needs a rebirth of the spirit. That wisest of peoples, the ancient Egyptians, believed implicitly in the magic of words. Words could transmute the very substance of life. With the right word, a man could amend his earthly existence and harvest his field in peace. With the right word, a man could meet complacently his last hour in the world, and, after that last hour, with the right word he could pass safely by the dread guardians of the ghostly thresholds and enter unscathed the shining meadows and happy halls of Eternity. This magic that lies in words may easily become dissipated little by little until a language loses its charm and its power. If words are squandered and subjected to base uses, if they are invoked with indifference rather than with joy; if, in short, they are treated as they are at present, then the life, the magic in them wanes and they die. They become impotent to animate dead men or unlock the doors of Eternity.

Gusto is more than one of the elements of fine letters: it is the essence. Perhaps that is the reason that only a few pale phantoms delineated by modern writers stand in my room to-night, where late there passed in full fantastical vigour, the flesh and blood of that lamentable knight, Don Quixote.

ROBERT HILLYER.

PHANTOM.

LXV

I THOUGHT of striking out the foregoing chapter. But I will let it stand, because it bears witness to a certain confusion into which I can be brought to this day by the recollection of my confrontation with the dead body and with Vigottschinsky at the side of it. But I shall attempt to clear up the main point of the chapter, and thereby perhaps the others too, to a certain extent.

All at once, you see, the murder-chamber revealed to me the entire hopeless wretchedness to which all life is condemned. This revelation occurred, as I say, with the power of a lightning-flash, in a blinding, almost deadly light, as it seemed to me at the moment. There lay the dead woman, in whom the rigor mortis had already set in, almost naked and, it may be said, exposed to the eyes of all in a disgraceful position. This throttled female, with her ugly shape and her throat all black and blue, had not one feature that reminded me of Aunt Schwab. This mass of moulded flesh was so alien to me that at the sight of it I felt nothing but an animal shudder.

It was for this, then, that my aunt had piled up penny on penny, mark on mark, had figured and done usury, systematically exploited the misery of others; to come to this end, which of course she could not have ultimately escaped, even if the unchastity of her old carcass had not lain here in the arms of her murderer. And was she really so very much less laden with guilt than he? Mother told of two cases where clients of my aunt had each in his own way committed suicide, when their notes were presented for payment.

Well, and these judges, these police officers, these prosecutors, could one pronounce them guiltless and sinless men? Have not almost all human beings a secret sin to conceal, a secret misdemeanour, if not many and positively criminal offences? And think of all that is done even by the courts, partly out of general human shortcomings, partly out of negligence or carelessness, whereby the happiness or unhappiness, the life or death of innocent persons is decided!

So I went out of this room in deep penitence, to be sure, but on the other hand with a strangely exalted soul. It was as if I were lifted out of myself. It was clear to me that provided I made good use of the insight I had gained, I could lose little, but could take to myself the true profits of life: the power of rising above one's existence, a power which is the equivalent of the power to renounce. And now perhaps you will understand my resolve to part with the little photograph of Veronica Harlan.

LXVI

Now I have crossed the threshold of the murder-chamber after all, but only in imagination, and merely passing over it back and forth in such a way that it could not but be clear how I went in and came out as two entirely different persons. After I had stood under the lightning-flash of my illumination, I saw the crude deceptions to which I had fallen a prey, about like one who thinks he is stepping on a green flowery mead and who sets his foot on a deep pit of liquid manure, completely overgrown with green duck-weed, in which he promptly sinks down over his head.

When I sat in my prison-cell, behind bolts and walls and close-set iron bars, robbed by men of my freedom, I had gained an inward freedom, I had cast off the bonds and fetters of grave error. I had risen up again out of the manure-pit and had shaken the filth from me. I think myself safe from a fresh immersion of that kind.

There followed the trial, there followed hearing after hearing. The investigations brought to light things that were so remote from the true course of my experience that they are without significance for it. And since I had learned once for all how to separate appearance from reality, I kept on applying my learning, and the central core of my being was no longer touched by the external procedure of the trial. At times during the sessions of the jury I felt as if my place in the dock were occupied only by a lay figure, on which judges and prosecutor were venting their rage, while I myself had stayed in my cell.

LXVII

A certain ebb in my communicative craving and in my material is setting in. So probably most of that which concerns the crisis in my life has gradually been told. And yet I feel as if something important had been left unsaid. I shall go over to the school-house to-day to see Dr. Levine—he has repeatedly asked about my literary undertaking—and shall agree with him upon a day when I can read to him what I have written so far.

The peculiar thing about my case is that I am in accord with it. For this reason my memoir has overstepped the bounds of what might have been a defence before worldly judges. On the contrary, the judges that I take into consideration as readers are such as have outgrown the judge's calling on their own part. Such a man is Dr. Levine, of whom I have already spoken. He is the quondam State's attorney, who is the village school-master here, and who has no greater desire than to spend the rest of his days under the elders, ashes, and birches of our simple hamlet, and to end the dream of life some day in the densely overgrown churchyard of the place. In this as in many other points he and I are of one mind.

When I said I was in accord with my case, I meant that I am not one of those who, like me, have done time in prison, and who can not get over grieving about it. Their ambition seems to have been made ten times more active, like the nerve of a hollow tooth, by the ineffaceable stain that adheres to them in the eyes of the community, and to cause them a thousand times more pain. They can not get over saying, "Oh, if I only hadn't . . . oh, if I only weren't . . . oh, if I could only undo what has been done. . . ." Their existence is a chain of self-reproaches and repentances. They are almost maddened by the attempt to turn back the hands of the clock of life to the time that preceded the deed. How differently I should act to-day, they think.

"Tell me," I asked Dr. Levine, "why did you give up your legal career?"

"Law and rights descend from generation to generation like an eternal malady," said Dr. Levine. And he added, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

I have also jotted down a passage from the patristic writer Tertullian which he translated for me. It shows how the early Christians thought of holders of power and wielders of power, of judges and courts, and reads thus: "Recently a dispute arose whether a servant of God might take over the administration of any post of honour or any office of authority. If we admit that anyone can do this without taking an oath, can act as holder of a post of honour without pronouncing judgment on the life and death or the civic honour of a human being, can promulgate a penal law without condemning some one to be chained, imprisoned or tortured—then even a servant of God may accept such an office."

No, I am not an "Oh-if-I-weren't" or "Oh-if-I-hadn't." I am a believer in being, in living. Life is much too vast to be stowed away without residue in the humdrum retail store- and back-room, and I already know too much about it not to feel firm and free and justified in it. Here is the sun, here is the moon, here are the stars, here is the milky way. I breathe air, fragrance, warmth, ice, fog, tempest. I enjoy the light, I enjoy the night-time. If they should exclude me from intercourse with the petty human fossils—well, what greater favour could be done me? But if they should promptly leave me entirely alone—well, after all, what human being is not entirely alone? And is my consciousness not unbounded? And should I esteem myself lower than humanity, lower than any living human being, when I am fervently pressing close to the Godhead every day and every night?

I have looked deeply into my case from every side, as I say, in the long days and nights of my solitary confinement, and finally and ultimately found myself in accord with it. The trivial, narrow-breasted, narrow-minded municipal clerk that I was is no more. My breast is arched, my spirit is independent and broad, even my walk has improved.

I will not gloss over ugliness, and yet one might use a rather bold figure and speak of a pearl that I had found at the bottom of the manure-pit and brought up with me. And without this experience-chain of disappointment and suffering, could I have known an hour like the one when I was released and stepped out of the door of the Breslau Inquisitory under the open sky, whereupon Marie was immediately clasped in my arms?

No, I will never see Dr. Levine. I shall not reveal the contents of these pages even to him. In the first place, there would be a certain shamelessness in it, the display of which I could perhaps not forgive myself for a long time. It would probably make me carry a discontent around with me for years to come. Who can tell whether that discontent might not assume proportions that would drive me away from here into a new and alien spot, simply because my secret, my most sacred and deepest secret, was in the hands of another? And of course I should have been exposing to public gaze the tenderest emotions of my father-in-law and my wife without their consent. "Why don't you write," my good wife did say to be sure, "perhaps it may turn out to be a book, you know." Well, it is a book by now, but my good Marie and Papa Stark might be startled after all, if they should see how far I have gone in the revelation of myself and of us all.

And yet might I not show it to them, either? Well, perhaps the time for that may still come, some winter day, some winter evening. For the time being I will lock the pages up.

It still remains to be considered, however, whether I should cause Marie's heart fresh pain by the revelations about Veronica.

I can easily put off Dr. Levine by saying that I had suddenly come to realize that the thing could not be done in this form, and that I must begin the entire work all over again.

My mother died before I saw the light of freedom again; I hope not of a broken heart, as they say. Besides Stark and Marie, my brother Hugo took care of her

while I was in prison, he having been appointed as drawing-teacher in a city high school by a strange agency, of which I shall speak. My mother never believed in my guilt, Marie and Stark say, and never lost her faith in my good character or in me.

Melitta only came to see me in prison a single time, but smuggled Veronica's picture in to me in a New Testament. I was deeply touched by this trait in her character.

To-day I do not know or care to know where she is.

My brother Hugo received his position, as I say, through a strange agency. What I could not achieve with the very most ardent desire of passion, or by distracting myself to the point of madness, namely: to so much as speak with Veronica Harlan, that privilege fell into my brother's lap in the most natural way in the world.

Fortunately, he had spent the period of my great crisis outside of Breslau, in Munich, in fact. He only returned to Breslau after the grass had long been growing over my trial. He had the best of recommendations from Munich, and so he received from the director of the Breslau school of art a so-called master-studio. Mr. Harlan had applied to this director and requested him to recommend a talented young artist, who also would be suitable in respect to his morals, to undertake the instruction of his daughter Veronica in drawing and painting. The choice had fallen on my brother. It fell on him and was approved by Harlan, although the director did not conceal the relation in which he stood to me and my fate.

Harlan took a liking to my brother, and it is due to his influence as member of the council that he was appointed, again in spite of me, as teacher in the employ of the city.

I have no idea in what manner my sister Melanie escaped the punitive hand of the law. I received a single letter from her, sent from Bahia in Brazil. She said she had married there. The close of the letter was: "If I get along well, I will write again two years from now. If not, good-bye for ever!"

GERHART HAUPTMANN.

(Translated by Bayard Quincy Morgan.)
(The End.)

LETTERS FROM A COUSIN: XV.

LONDON. 20 November, 1922.

OUR! Human language is inadequate to express the intense relief of these days. One needs the bark of a dog, or the legs of a horse, or an infant's lissom capacity for paroxysms of delight. An adult human being can only chuckle and light his pipe, and look out for any remnant of trouble from the war-mind as it attempts to wreak its spite at being removed from the centre of human activity, the British Isles, by one of our periodic revulsions from melodramatic pretension to character.

It had become impossible, it had become appallingly bad business, any longer to continue the humbug of the last thirty years, which had lost the power to deceive even ourselves, and therefore anybody else. It had become obvious to ourselves, always the last to admit either failure or success, that the world would no longer be fobbed off with the British Empire as a substitute for British character, sense of law and good manners. Therefore we have cut the cheap idealism wasted on imperialist adventures, and with a great gasp of relief come down to hard tacks, where we are faced with the fact, intolerable to our paramount commercial sense, that we are in debt. Such accounts as have been kept by our Great Men show a horrible debit, not only financial, but moral, artistic and intellectual. Bang! goes the distention of the coarse hysteria which has impeded the life of the world for so long, and the electors install a Government of modest good breeding, and an Opposition of intelligence and courage!

There is some chance then of our discovering what, if any, is the function of politics in modern life. I can see none at present, but you never know, and it is just as bad to dogmatize negatively as positively. It is not very hard to discern the orientation of the Government and the Opposition. We English have never understood, and

never will understand, European politics. The Mediterranean mentality defeats us utterly, and both the Germans and the Russians strike us as infantile. The Government's orientation is towards Canada, trading population for a market; while the Opposition's is towards Owenite or Webbian socialism, which has always seemed to me to be imperialism writ small; just as intolerant, just as materialistic, just as oblivious of freedom and humanism, and therefore just as impotent to enlarge life and as injurious to it in its confinement. The upshot will probably be a deal with Canada, on the terms that Sidney Webb and his friends are allowed to be as bureaucratic in dealing with the practical side of the affair as they please, and as Milner was in dealing with South Africa when the orientation lay in that direction and things were very far from coming to a head, as they have now done; and the result will be no better, because the cocksure bureaucratic method is hideously inadequate, hasty, careless, ruinous to independence and initiative, measuring problems in terms of figures and not of human lives, assuming that arrangements will work because they have been made on paper. But life is fiery stuff, and paper burns only too easily, as the war-years have shown. Indeed, I am pretty sure that all the paper schemes have been destroyed, except in the brains of those who evolved them. It looks very pretty on paper to transfer the surplus population of Great Britain to Canada, where they say that there is room for 100 million, but people can not go to Canada unless there is work for them to do there, and there can not be work for them to do until finance is a force to support the worker, instead of, as now, a net to strangle his efforts—and by worker I do not mean only the horny-handed, but anyone who tries to do more than hand his money over to people he does not know and leave his bank to collect the interest.

Politicians, like other people, are always looking for short cuts. There are none. The world's trouble now is financial; and as the financiers leave it to the politicians, it only gets worse and worse because the politicians go on making their beautiful schemes under the impression that the only function of the bank is to give them the necessary credit, which credit the bank in return is allowed to use as cash: a simple transaction which, like other simple things, is so bewildering that no one attempts to follow it, least of all the politicians or the financiers. There is somehow a whole heap of money, and that is all they know, and all they think they need to know. The rest of us are left to row upstream as best we may, because somehow nowadays cash isn't cash, and credit isn't credit, but something else which nobody attempts to explain, and it becomes more and more difficult to produce a book or a field of corn or a pair of boots, except at a loss; and yet there are more people wanting books and corn and boots than there ever were. They get them somehow or other, but it is no thanks to the financiers and the politicians that they do; and yet financiers and politicians are paid by us to perform certain services, the aim of which is to facilitate the supply of books, corn, etc., and they are continually making us collectively buy guns, and other people's countries, and palaces for officials and all kinds of things that just irritate us and interfere with our arrangements for our families; and by way of cheering us up they give us in newspapers and magazines and public speeches more words than we could swallow in several generations; and all the time those darned figures hop from the Treasury to the bank and back again, and are now cash and now credit, and nothing at all happens, and nobody looks into this Holy of Holies where the mischief all happens, and nobody insists that both credit and cash must have some relation to work, mental and physical. Whatever your population, you can not make money faster than corn can grow, or cattle can breed. A usurer is not making money; he is only abusing it by mopping up more than his fair share of the work of the world which makes corn grow bread, and cattle breed beef, in the right place: but even when you have your corn and your cattle you must have some kind of *idea* or men and women can not keep up the pace; and I do not think any scheme for the organization of the

population of any particular area can rank as an idea. An empire is not an idea: it is generally a mistake of some heady ruffian who persuades you that it is better to have a share in a copper-mine in Chile than a loaf in your larder, or a smile on the face of your daughter. Socialism is not an idea; it is rather a gloomy denial of the heady ruffian and his copper-mine, and an obstinate belief that the cure for the evils of political control of finances is more and more of it, with the bank not only allowing you a beggarly one per cent on your money (which in the modern world is your life), but spending it for you into the bargain. An idea is an emanation of the human spirit that lives in your heart and in your head, and continually enlarges your sense of being; a process which brings an alternation of pain and delight. Now, or until they get used to it, men and women are apt to get drunk on delight and to shrink fearfully from pain; wherefore their rulers decree that ideas are bad for them, and that what they want instead is the sobering discipline of some wise, automatic social organization, military, or socialistic or communistic or democratic or republican. But all the same, every man and woman has his idea of the mysterious business of being a man or a woman, and he or she will try it out by hook or by crook. It may be a thoroughly bad idea, but nothing will stop it; and nobody ever has any idea of what society ought to be. Lots of people have theories about it (I have some myself), but theories are not ideas. To live by theories is to be lean and cautious; to live by ideas is to be thoroughly and satisfactorily yourself, the only thing you have to give to other people in return for what they do for you, the real bargain which is the source of society.

Now how do our Governments, how do our banks look in relation to that bargain? They thwart it at every turn. You cast your Self upon the waters so that it may be returned to you an hundredfold, but nothing of the kind happens. You go on wondering what has happened to your Self of which your wife and children and friends are badly in need; and when you make timid inquiries about it, you are told that the British Empire is raising the moral tone of the Turks, or that France is taking glory and civilization to Syria, or that America is making white men of Haitian Negroes; and so your poor Self dwindles and dwindles and becomes more and more inarticulate, and your son goes to the dogs, and your daughter marries the first nincompoop who comes along because she must find some one to talk to; and your Self (which is the sole source of comfort of her Self) is numbed and desperate.

If socialism will cure that, I will be a socialist; but I don't think it will. Means must be found by which a man's work can come back to him in self-respect; acquiescence in the loss of which is now the world's prime mischief. I trace it, wrongly or rightly, but I think rightly, to the manipulation of finance between Governments and banks, unthinking, stupid; due to minds hypnotized by its facility. It has been overdone; and the reality and the actual consequences of these operations have to be faced, because the war-debts have to be paid or cancelled, and neither can be done without some more direct relationship between work and credit—a consummation repulsive to the investor, because it brings home his responsibility to him and forces him to think; and disastrous to the speculator because it extends the scope and increases the absorbing power of sound business.

Well, well, we shall see. Things are healthier now in England than they have been for two hundred years. The atmosphere will be progressively cleaner, as during the last twenty years it has been progressively more foul; and as our follies and corruptions fall away, we shall be able to take stock of our real achievements, if any. We 'ave had fine men in science, if in nothing else, and our literary tradition has just, but only just, managed to survive. The meshes of a dishonest and cowardly tyranny had hardly snapped when up popped Shelley with the first public performance of the "Cenci." How staggering it is that a great community should have been so devitalized as to shudder away from the beauty, the power, the insight, the rare delicacy of its tenderest poet

as he said, Consider all this horror, which is nothing to the horror in which you choose to live—and yet life is beautiful, indestructible, teeming with grace and form to be had for the taking, if you would only take. Was Shelley an anarchist? He was a poet, one for whom freedom meant freedom of utterance; for the Word is of God, and the uttered word bears with it the heart's blood of humanity, flowering in invincible and benign beauty.

There is really no need to worry about Governments and banks. The real rulers of men are Shelley and his few comrades of love and genius, and in their hands we are safe and sound, for in them our Selves are given back to us a thousandfold.

GILBERT CANNAN.

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

WICKED EUROPE.

SIRS: Fortunately for the peace of the world the persisting high cost of cables acts as an automatic fine sieve that catches only the larger fish of American news for the distracted populations of Europe. Salient details of the tariff-scheme to assist the restoration of normalcy on the Continent by preventing any exporting to the United States; prize-fight gossip; the latest movie and divorce scandals; liquor-smuggling; and the record of important votes or Presidential vetoes in Washington; these constitute the humdrum, day-by-day items that flash under the restless ocean to the nations of Europe. Occasionally, the cables interlard their routine grist of scandals and murders and divorces with a few quotations from the speech of some eloquent American statesman intent on relieving his feelings at Europe's expense. Senator Borah's speech before the Press Club of Chicago, some time ago, in which Europe was roundly told just how her perpetual bickerings were condemned by the conscience of the Christian world, was accorded the unusual honour of being flashed abroad to the extent of a full half-column, of ordinary newspaper-length. On the foreign page, under the conventional title of "Les Etats-Unis," one read that M. Borah, *sénateur*, had pronounced a "*discours*" wherein the European reader, if he happened to be a European citizen, learned that he and no one else was responsible for all the trouble in which he found himself, and that the citizens across the seas regarded themselves as very far above his sinful state in the matter of honour, Christian morals, and pacific intentions. These sentiments probably did not strike him as extreme or peculiar, because they must have recalled to him how often he had heard that sort of thing before the war, and how, since the war, he had been hearing it repeated with ever-increasing stridency. Furthermore, if—as well might have been the case—under the same caption he read, in another paragraph, of a particularly atrocious lynching, he probably went out to lunch and had his before-meal *apéritif* with an untroubled conscience.

It is perhaps supererogatory to reiterate that nations on the Continent of Europe, in their present condition of instability and misery, will not be stimulated to any specific political action (or any other, for that matter) by highly moral appeals from America. Germany, who on occasion has been susceptible to this peculiar Anglo-Saxon disease, is far too obsessed with her own immediate problems of existence to listen to the clarion notes of any new prophet; and the rest of the Continent never has had, and has not yet developed, this queer capacity for battling over a moral issue. Europe is too old to be rallied around a slogan of morality at this late date, and if ever it had any leanings in that direction (it did have a few right after the Armistice), the last three years of experience have caused it to revert to its older attitude of cynical realism. Even the appeal to "Christian" morality leaves the unregenerate European cold; he has had a strong dose of Christian morality during the last few years and he has not found the after effects any too exhilarating. He has never shared America's sentimental horror about the "unspeakable" Turk; for every

country on the Continent has at one time or another had dealings with a neighbour, compared with whose conduct that of Turkey has seemed particularly gentlemanly and civilized. The European has, moreover, been accustomed for a considerable period of time to rub shoulders with religions other than his own, and has developed towards them a tolerance which would probably impress the good Kansan as utterly pagan and wicked.

The sad truth is that Europe has none of the Christian's consciousness of sin. All sorts of emotions are raging here—racial enmities, hunger, the desire for power or revenge, the lust for money, the longing for some kind of stability; but Christian humility is a sentiment that is singularly lacking. The charge, coming from the United States, that the root of Europe's present troubles is in her "imperialism," strikes the good European as rather odd. He might listen with some patience to such an accusation from an old-fashioned Chinaman, but coming from American sources, it merely causes him to shrug his shoulders. True, certain publicists of international repute seem never to tire of pointing to the remarkable magnanimity which the United States displayed when she refused to take any of the loot at the close of the late free-for-all hostilities; yet the average European would be more inclined to be impressed by this phenomenon, if he could forget war-debts, industrial uncertainty, and the fluctuations of those paper currencies which somehow even the most egregious imperialism has failed to give a solid foundation. The citizen of Europe finds it extraordinarily difficult to picture the United States, in its righteousness and purity, as secretly envious of selfish and grasping Europe. The vision strains him beyond his powers.

If the inhabitants of the United States sincerely desire Europe to attain a state which will not so closely resemble a lunatic asylum, they will do well to take all their moralistic assumptions of superiority quietly outside, tie a big boulder about them, and throw them into the deepest channel of the Mississippi, along whose banks they flourish in such abundance. The war actually did take place, however diligently the United States may try to forget the fact, and we are, all of us, faced with its consequences, the European a little more vividly and immediately than the luckier American in the comparative isolation afforded by two wide protecting oceans. Most Europeans are desperately trying to see some way out of the present mess, and there is hardly a single resident in Europe to-day who will not admit freely that the way out will be considerably shorter if the United States takes a hand. Nevertheless, when the United States starts out with a great blowing on the moral horns, the European is utterly nonplussed and dismayed. His mind is completely addled by this incomprehensible performance; he is in no position to co-operate with anybody about anything.

Let America begin by making a clear outline for herself of her selfish wants. The desire for a certain degree of stability in the world at large will be among her natural wishes. Let her admit this, without hypocrisy, and ask herself how much it is worth to her, and what price she is willing to pay for it. By talking to Europe in this fashion, the United States may pick up a much better bargain than she is looking for at present. Europe has much with which she is willing to part for a small consideration, including a great deal of the contemporary factitious quarrelling, which continues because nobody is in a position quite strong enough to stop it, i. e., nobody has the money. Of course, America may decide that, after all, European stability is not worth the price. In that case, Europe would be the last to reproach her; she would at least be using the kind of talk that Europe can understand, which is more than can be said of all this befogging twaddle about "Christian morality." Another full generation must grow to manhood before even the alphabet of that strange, ancient language will be again a matter of common Continental knowledge. Meanwhile, one fears, Europe will continue to be indomitably wicked; but it is really a waste of breath to tell her so. I am, etc.,

HAROLD E. STEARNS.

MISCELLANY.

IMMERSION in the brisk commercial life of New York develops protective repartee to a degree that might interest the neo-Darwinians, if any of these are left after Mr. Bryan's recent onslaughts. One of my friends cited an amusing and colourful example the other day. Sitting beside her in a subway-express was a self-reliant young woman who looked as if she might be a stenographer in the cloak-and-suit district, and she had a couple of good-sized satchels beside her on the floor. A man pushing his way hurriedly to the exit stumbled over the satchels, and said, "Say, you'd ought to take those bags in." "Say, you'd ought to wear a cow-bell," she replied promptly. Then she observed to my friend in a semi-apologetic tone, "That's all I could think of to say, quick, like that!" Such stories always remind me of the old London cab-drivers, among whom the power of repartee was by similar processes sharpened down to the finest possible point. Mr. Walter Pach once told me a superb story of a cabman who by awkward driving had managed to lock wheels with another cab. The other cabby, at a standstill, with the reins loose in his lap, surveyed the obstructionist with a look of bland disdain, and then inquired, "Well, 'ow are you this mornin'—an' 'ow does yer like London?" For delectable and toothsome subtlety, I think this is hard to beat.

FROM a philosophic point of view, it seems to me that the secret order of Free Masons is one of the most interesting of human institutions, not because of the size of its membership, or the number of countries in which it flourishes, or even for the ease with which it keeps its "secrets," but chiefly because of its remarkable success in dealing with "modernism." Almost alone among the institutions of man, freemasonry is—or at any rate seems to be—quite untroubled by the rise of heretics within its ranks. The Roman Catholic Church has its heretics; the Christian Scientists have already in Mrs. Stetson a schismatic to deal with; one hears even that the Salvation Army has been troubled with rebels and "higher critics." But in freemasonry one finds an order with an elaborate structure of moral truth—a traditional morality—accompanied by an even more elaborate ritual for its expression. One has, in short, a church. Now it is true that years ago on the Continent the Free Masons, especially in France, were strongly anti-clerical, leaning towards agnosticism if not actually embracing it, whereas in England and America they had, during the same period, an almost evangelical fervour. Nevertheless, in spite of these divergences, the world has never been treated to the spectacle of an open rupture. While the alleged "exposures" of freemasonry continue in diverse profusion, nothing remotely approaching heresy or schism mars, for the onlooker, the extraordinary placidity of the scene. Indeed, it seems to me that for the philosopher curious about big and little things, freemasonry has only one secret that is really worth stealing: how does it manage to master and subdue the "modernist" impulse in mankind? It is a dangerous secret, however, and I am not sure but that a genuine philosopher would be content to let it remain for ever unrevealed.

AMONG the members returned to the British Parliament in the recent general election, one of the most picturesque and significant personalities is Shapurji Saklatvala, an Indian Parsee. The first Indian to enter the British Parliament was another Parsee, Dadabhai Naoroji, the "Grand Old Man of India," who contested and won a British constituency as a Liberal more than a generation ago. The story goes that Lord Salisbury, then the leader of the Tories, professed to be shocked that a "black man" was to invade Parliament. Later on, when Naoroji appeared on the floor of the House, it was remarked that his complexion was several shades fairer than his Lordship's! Subsequently another Indian, an official protégé—I do not remember his name—entered the British Parliament under Tory auspices, in order to furnish a counterblast to Naoroji's splendid advocacy of India's national cause.

SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA, however, is in a class by himself. While employed in the London establishment of the Tatas, the biggest commercial enterprise controlled by Indians, he has for several years been intimately and actively identified with the left wing of the British Labour party. No frailer man could have sustained this dual rôle; but Shapurji's versatility equalled only by his abounding vitality. Many and salty were the tears shed by the Tatas at the heretical leanings of their employee, but he was insensible alike to their cajolery and their bullying. So they gnashed their teeth and let him be, for the business acumen and experience of this brilliant bolshevik could not be replaced.

SAKLATVALA has been returned as the Labour M. P. for Battersea—John Burns's old stamping-ground. There are few men who are personally more popular with the rank and file of British labour than he. Battersea has returned him, there is reason to believe, in spite of the fact that some of the official bigwigs of the party rather frowned upon his "extremism," and would have willingly cancelled his candidature. But as an orator Saklatvala is immensely effective; no mob can resist him. He is not, however, merely a demagogue. He has a real grasp of the economics of international imperialism and possesses a good sense of humour as well. Saklatvala should be able to give a good account of himself in the House of Commons, and, especially on Indian affairs, he should be both illuminating and powerful.

JOURNEYMAN.

THE THEATRE.

A HIT AND A MISS.

THE EQUITY PLAYERS, who made a bungling start with the Spanish play, "Malvaloca," have in their second production gone a long way towards counteracting their first step. They have, indeed, given good ground for the hope that they may become an ally of the Theatre Guild—an ally, not a rival. The Theatre Guild seems pretty consistently to have sought its plays across the Atlantic, and certainly to have let severely alone the type of homely comedy-drama that is indigenous to these more or less United States. But "Hospitality," the play just produced by the Equity Players, is not only of American authorship (Leon Cunningham, a young Middle-Westerner, is the dramatist); it is directly in the homely comedy-drama tradition. It stems neither from Tolstoy nor Ibsen. It stems from Charlie Hoyt and James A. Herne and G. M. Cohan. If one imagine "The First Year" treated more seriously, its characters probed a little more deeply, one has the note of "Hospitality." Moreover, the play is flawlessly cast, and admirably directed by Mr. Duncan. It creates and preserves a perfect illusion of surface-reality, and in its ensemble-acting is smooth and balanced. If the Equity Players can hold this pace, their place in our theatre is assured.

Not that Mr. Cunningham's play is without flaws; it has several rather grave ones. But its merits are more conspicuous, and it is our own. There must be one theatre, at least, where our native drama may have a chance to develop on its own lines, and in accordance with what we might call folk-demands. The danger always is, of course, that the commercial playhouse, while encouraging the native drama, will encourage it to remain stationary, imitative of itself. If once or twice a year the Equity Players can find and produce a native work which attempts to carry the folk-idiom to finer and deeper achievement, they will be performing a unique function.

"Hospitality" tells the story of a mother who can love her children with an intensity all the greater for its suppression, but who does not know how to mother them. From childhood all her life has been spent in looking first after younger sisters and brothers, and then after her own brood. She is overworked, illiterate, hard, shrewd, inexpressive. She has slaved to put her son through college, and has never kissed him good night. When he marries not the neighbour of her choice, but a girl above him in wealth and social station, she sets out deliberately to separate them, because she is determined her boy shall not be slowly destroyed by a parasitic butterfly. She succeeds in breaking up this marriage, though (without much rhyme or reason) she herself dies of heart-failure in accomplishing it. This central character of the play is a vivid, authentic portrait, sketched with shrewd strokes of humour, painted in a racy vernacular, free of sentimentality, and capably played by Louise Closser Hale. For two acts, or as long as the scene remains in the mother's boarding-house, the entire drama has a homely veracity and a pungent sting of character-probing which make it exceptional.

Where the drama errs is in the third act, when the mother goes to live in the son's home. In the first place, the author has not sufficiently explained and developed the characters of the son and especially the son's butterfly wife, and in the second place he has not maintained what one might call the balance of sympathy. Galsworthy would have made no such mistake. When the mother comes to the son's house, she holds one's sympathies. Once there, she acts in such a way that one's sympathies are entirely transferred to the wife, and when the son does not take his mother in hand, one loses all sympathy with him, too. The pathos of the situation, of course, lies in the fact that the mother is so crude and clumsy in her methods, and yet has so good cause for her actions. But the situation is robbed of all save a cheaply theatrical value if the son can be separated from his wife with no heartbreak, if the wife is nothing but a butterfly. In short, Mr. Cunningham's task suddenly, in act three, became extremely difficult. He had, in order to complete his drama properly, to maintain a balance of sympathy among three people, all at cross purposes; a mother clumsily fighting to win her son away from a woman, the woman fighting against a crude and insulting mother-in-law in her house, the son torn between his affection for the two, and his doubts and jealousies. The task proved rather too much for the young playwright. His last act becomes, for the most part, a matter of theatrical contrivance, and the homely veracity of the earlier acts evaporates. Even here, however, thanks in part to admirable acting, the theatrical contrivance rises to moments of genuine excitement, and keeps the drama alive for an audience.

The Equity Players' next venture will again be a native play, this time a satirical comedy by Jesse Lynch Williams, on the subject of divorce. His earlier play of like nature, "Why Marry?" which won the Pulitzer prize two or three years ago, gives ground for happy expectations. At any rate, the Equity venture seems to have found its stride, and to be on the way to becoming an important factor in the theatrical life of America.

It is odd that in a season when so many plays are unusually well cast and acted, the Theatre Guild should be the one to slip. Their recent production of "The Lucky One," a play by the prolific and popular A. A. Milne, is, for them, rather painfully imperfect. Nor can one greatly blame their new director, Komisarjevsky, the famous Russian producer, since the cast was doubtless in part chosen and considerably rehearsed before he arrived. It is rather a pity, too, because "The Lucky One" contains more sustaining qualities than most of Mr. Milne's comedies. It deserves as vivid a production, certainly, as "Mr. Pim Passes By," the play with which the Guild introduced Mr. Milne to America. "Mr. Pim Passes By," however, revolved around a central character impersonated by Miss Laura Hope Crews, and with the leading strings in her capable hands there was small danger of going wrong. "The Lucky One" likewise revolves about a central character, a young man; and the Guild did not succeed in finding a masculine counterpart of Miss Crews's ability to impersonate him. A wheel revolving on a bent axle is possibly not an unfair metaphor for the present somewhat wobbly production.

The trouble is, of course, that this central character is supposedly endowed with an all-conquering charm and prowess. He is a younger son, but he does everything better, or more easily, than anybody else, especially his elder brother. He plays the golf course in seventy-two; he is on the county cricket-team; he gets into the Foreign Office because of his smile; he wins a beautiful girl as his fiancée, taking her away (though he does not know it) from his brother. Behind his back, and to his face, his family flatter and pet him. It is no part of the author's plan, for two out of his three acts, that you should also think him a hero and a paragon. The author certainly wishes you to sympathize with the elder brother, and suspect the other of superficiality. But neither is it any part of his plan that you should not plainly see why everybody falls for Gerald. You too, must like him, yield to him, have to fight against the contagion of his smile. Few people, probably, realize how difficult a rôle this is to cast satisfactorily, or to play satisfactorily. It requires in an unusual degree a combination of acting skill with exactly the right personality. So far as I am concerned, I frankly confess that I can think of but one person with exactly the right personality, and he was not available for the Theatre Guild. I refer to H. R. H. the Prince of Wales. Gerald is a young man of easy but perfect manners, much given to light, attractive, intelligent banter, and not given at all to solemn talk, perfectly dressed, attractive to look at, contagiously friendly, who has always been liked and expects to be liked, but without any apparent self-consciousness about it. In short, he should be endowed with what Barrie tersely called "that damned charm."

So much for the first two acts, wherein the actor who plays Gerald is called upon chiefly to exert this charm to the utmost against the web of circumstance that the dramatist is weaving to enmesh him, to make him look like a bit of a cad, or at any rate the unconscious cause of all his poor elder brother's disaster, and one who does not really deserve all of his good fortune.

But in the third act, Mr. Milne gives a twist to his story which gives it its special value. The elder brother, because of his ignorance of business (he had to go to "the City" while Gerald got the Government

plum), has suffered arrest and imprisonment. But moved by pity for him, the girl in the case has swung back from Gerald to him, and after his release from jail the two return together, she to break with Gerald, he to gloat over him. This is the one triumph the poor chap has ever enjoyed since his brilliant younger brother was out of knickers. The suppressed hatred of years, made more bitter by imprisonment, bursts forth. In those two scenes, between the girl and Gerald, and the brother and Gerald, the younger man has to show that beneath what looked so light and care-free and casual was a love deeper and truer than the other's, and that in his brotherly relation his point of view has not only been more realistic, but more chivalrous, more tolerant, more kindly. His final outburst, to meet the brother's, tells the truth about that unfortunate weakling, and ends with the declaration, "I despise you. And now, damn you, will you shake hands?"

One suspects a certain autobiographical revelation in these finely written scenes. Mr. Milne, as an author, must often have been accused of travelling on his charm, with nothing deep or solid behind the pleasant banter. He is writing, in a sense, the vindication of those persons who do not wear their hearts upon their sleeves, who prefer manners to moralizings, banter to solemnity, who do things well and yet easily, and who are not necessarily snobs and lightweights because the gods have given them charm. Amid pomposity and ugliness, the happy Gerald of life and literature move with an annoying assurance and success, till we envious ones declare they are but soap bubbles. Well, in this play they attempted to prick the bubble—and lo! it was a cannon ball. There is pique in the situation, and more than a grain of truth.

However, in order to play it successfully, the actor who takes the part of Gerald must have more than charm. He must have force, sincerity, vocal technique, presence. Except for the vocal technique, the Guild found such a man in Dennis King. Only, alas! these excellent and necessary qualities were not combined with the personality demanded by the earlier acts. One never quite believed in him as cricketer or golfer. One was no more won by his smile than one would have been by that of any other presentable young man, with rather too strong a face. Bantering remarks did not seem to come naturally to him, nor were charming manners his inevitable expression. We never really doubted that he was solid underneath. In other words, he was not really the sort of person who would have perplexed and angered Babbitt, let us say. That being the case, the total impression of "The Lucky One" lacked the clarity and point it should have had.

One must also confess that not a few of the lesser parts were acted with a heavy hand, the players considerably less suggesting the air of an English country house than did Mr. Simonson's charming sets. The enunciation of certain actors was atrocious, so that much of the bright introductory dialogue on the subject of golf was quite lost. There is no excuse whatever for this, even if there is for the failure to secure actors of more distinction of manner for the country gentlemen and their ladies. Any actor can be made to speak distinctly. If he will not do it, the stage door swings outward, by order of the Fire Department. The Guild ought to be thoroughly ashamed that such a criticism has to be made of one of their productions. Because they are successful is no reason why they should be sloppy.

WALTER PRICHARD EATON.

POETRY.

THE SHIP O' BED.

When I was young, I had a bed
That was no bed at all,
But a good great ship with seven masts
And seamen brown and tall.

Each seaman had a lantern white
To light us past the bars,
And all of them knew old sea-songs,
And their eyes were like the stars.

The stars rolled millions overhead,
But seven were made fast,
The brightest and the best of all,
Upon each mighty mast.

Four Captains had my starry bed,
I named them in my prayer,
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
With golden beards and hair.

But the Pilot, whom I loved the best
Because he called me Sir
And played the games I liked to play,
Was good Saint Christopher.

Out we broke our sails which seemed
Like patches that the moon
Makes upon a quiet floor
When crickets sing their tune.

And we were off to seek a Dame
Who would be kind to me
And turn each sailor's heart to gold,
The Lady of the Sea!

I think, she lived beyond the place
Where fish grow crowns of gold
And where there are so many tales
That all are never told.

The wind blew very wonderful
Throwing foam like snow,
Yet always let us hear the call
Of sea-chicks peeping low.

Out the yellow beards all flew
Of Matthew, Luke and John,
But Mark's flew longest of them all
And was coloured like the dawn.

The fish took wing and played about
Each opal sail and sang
Of goose-girls and the currant-fruits
That on the bun-trees hang.

When flowers came above the waves
We knew the port was nigh;
We could see a silver town
Rising up hard by.

Down came our sails, each sailor bowed
And plucked his cap to me. . . .
'Twas day, and there my Mother stood,
The Lady of the Sea!

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

LOOKING OUT FOR RUSSIA.

SIRS: The issue of the *Freeman* of 15 November comments in an interesting way upon what is termed a "curious colonial agreement," which it states Mr. Outhwaite had disclosed in the *London Herald* as having been under negotiation between Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith and members of the German Government shortly before the war. Much is said in comment upon the assumed fact that by its terms Russia was frozen out; and that because of it Russian statesmen had considerable ground to make trouble—the terms of the agreement offering a severe check for Russia, but providing for Germany a handsome co-partnership in the scheme of imperialism in the Near East.

Much of the article referred to appears to have been written in clear misapprehension of the established facts of the situation, as disclosed fully by the *Memoirs of Prince Lichnowsky*

published in 1918. The agreement in question was negotiated between Sir Edward Grey and Prince Lichnowsky before the war, and its text was fully contained in the Memoirs. Prince Lichnowsky said, among other things, that "all the economic questions connected with the German enterprise were regulated in substantial accord with the desires of the German bank." The treaty provided that the Germans were to be admitted "to participation in Basra Harbour work," and given rights in the Tigris which had formerly been a monopoly of the firm of Lynch. Prince Lichnowsky found that under the treaty, Mesopotamia, as far as Basra, was to be a German sphere of interest without prejudice to certain older British private rights, while the British were to control the coasts of the Persian Gulf and the Smyrna-Aidin line; the French were to control Syria and the Russians Armenia. Russia was therefore not forgotten in the general scheme of plunder while Germany was to be given certain rights in Portuguese Africa, which apparently it was only within the power of Portugal to bestow.

Commenting upon these Memoirs, von Jagow, the former German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said that "even Prince Lichnowsky does not deny that we had there (in the Orient) great economic interests to represent; but to-day economic interests are no longer to be separated from political interests."

From the foregoing, the error of the Outhwaite statement is to be seen; in that the proposed agreement was for the benefit not alone of English and German capitalists, but French and Russian as well. However, as Lichnowsky mourned, this agreement, which he believed would have preserved the peace of the world, was not confirmed by Germany, and as he further thinks, the world-war was the result; a result which ratification would have avoided.

Putting the matter baldly, if England, Germany, Russia, and France, or more correctly speaking, their controlling capitalists, had gotten each an appropriate share in colonial plunder, a world-wide disaster would have been avoided. The facts above mentioned have been developed in the recent work "Democracy's International Law." I am, etc.,

Washington, D. C.

JACKSON H. RALSTON.

ARTIST AND ECONOMIST.

SIRS: It accorded with the *Freeman's* estimate of the relative values of political and economic self-government that the editorial entitled, "A Salvage in Ireland" should conclude with the sentence, "If only the Irish *Homestead* is saved out of the wreck of Irish affairs, Ireland will still preserve its essential soul." The clearer understanding of the need for economic liberty and power which both the theory of economic determinism and experience in political freedom has been producing in other nations, is yet but little absorbed by the Irish mind. Preoccupied with the pursuit of political autonomy it has neglected the economic and educational conditions of freedom and unity. What is so evident to economically exploited but politically free or separate countries like Mexico and Russia, that social ownership and production is essential to real freedom and growth, has been lost sight of by even the most heroic of Ireland's patriots. Mr. George Russell's patriotism has been unique in Ireland and indeed would be uncommon anywhere because he perceives these neglected aspects of personal and national liberty and the possibilities of team-play in building a rural civilization. He sees with the vividness of a great poet and artist but with the clarity of the economist patiently proportioning means to ends, fully conversant with the resources of Ireland. The best realist as well as idealist of the Irish co-operative movement, which is absolutely tolerant of the most passionately opposed politics and religions, the editor of the *Homestead* invites all classes to the common field of mutual assistance.

Yet in his political views he has less desire than Parnell or De Valera to "set bounds to the onward march of a nation." For most leaders of Irish public opinion have not known more than the second part of John Stuart Mills's dictum that "a people has sometimes become free because it has first grown wealthy, or wealthy because it has first become free." I suspect that this may be why our struggle for liberty has been so long and so pointless. To-day Ireland is a partitioned country in tethered freedom to an Empire, with a Government which resorts to the most callous and sickening methods of suppressing some of the spiritual successors of Wolfe Tone. The decision of the Irish majority for the Free State may or may not be wise under the circumstances. "Ireland did not fight for a stepping-stone," an Irishwoman told me, but I doubt whether stepping-stones should not be used. Tom Kettle upset the former simile of the compromisers when he retorted "Half a loaf may be better than no bread, but is half

a chronometer better than no watch?" I believe that the co-operative programme urged by Mr. Russell supplies the missing elements in the instrument of Irish liberty which, when carried to its logical goal, will unite Ireland not with an empire but with itself and with a free world.

Our metropolitan editorial scribes are almost overwhelming in their bland assurances that the treaty signed in London and ratified by the Irish electorate expresses the free will of the Irish majority. They fairly touch the heart of a country threatened with "immediate and terrible war" as the alternative. Some future Lecky will gather these announcements as data for a continued "History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism." In an age which, outside the Island of Destiny, is permeated with such rationalism, it is not so strangely creditable that the journal of the genius of the Irish co-operative movement should have been nearly stalled for lack of funds scarcely equal to the amount necessary to purchase the limousine of an Irish distiller of alcoholic or theological spirits. Surely a remarkable age, as the *Freeman* observes; fearful and wonderful are its manifestations. I am, etc.,

Brooklyn, New York.

DANIEL D. MOLONY.

"THE BALLAD OF WHISKY STRAIGHT."

SIRS: In connexion with the paper which appeared in the *Freeman* of 15 November, concerning the authorship of the chanty founded on the song placed in the mouth of Cap'n Billy Bones by Stevenson, and beginning,

"Sixteen men on the dead man's chest;
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum!"

I should like to say that I am fully in accord with the opinion of Mr. Starrett that the name of the author, Young E. Allison, is one that will endure.

I wonder if readers of the *Freeman* have ever read another poem by Mr. Allison which is famous—at least in Kentucky. It is called "The Ballad of Whisky Straight" and goes like this:

"Let dreamers whine
Of the pleasures of wine
For lovers of soft delight;
But this is the song
Of a tippie that's strong—
For men who must toil and fight.
Now the drink of luck
For the man full of pluck
Is easy to nominate:
It's the good old whisky of old Kentuck,
And you always drink it straight.

"A julep's tang
Will diminish the pang
Of an old man's dream of yore,
When meadows were green
And the brook flowed between
The hills he will climb no more;
But the drink of luck
For the youth of good pluck,
Who can look in the eye of fate,
Is the good old whisky of old Kentuck,
And invariably straight.

"So here's to the corn
That is growing this morn
All tasselled and gold and gay!
To the old copper still
In the sour mash mill
By the spring on the turnpike grey!
May the fount of luck
For the man full of pluck
Flow ever without abate
With the good old whisky of old Kentuck,
And strong and pure and straight.

Envoi

"Old straight whisky! That is the drink of life—
Consolation, family, friends and wife!
So make your glasses ready,
Pour fingers three, then—steady!
'Here's good' luck to Kentucky and whisky
straight!"

I am, etc.,

Detroit, Michigan

CLARK KINNAIRD.

BOOKS.

A DEFEATED POET.

PROFESSOR HOUSMAN'S new book of poems proves him again not merely a fine poet, but a poet of wide and general appeal.¹ This new volume has the same restraint and the same marvellous perfection, in its limited scope, that sold the "Shropshire Lad" through twenty editions. The whole output of Mr. Housman, as far as the non-classical world is concerned, consists now of two volumes of poems, very small, and published at an interval of twenty-seven years. They need no words of mine to recommend them; they have forced their way into the pockets of readers who refuse to read any other poet, or read only Mrs. Wilcox; they have discomfited the superior person by being both undeniably good and immensely popular.

But there is more in these little volumes than a handful of some of the most charming songs in the English language. There is a dead soul. One of the leaders of the unemployed (who and where I can not remember) recently said that the industrial machine affected men in three ways. Some it made into rebels; some it degraded into brutes. But "there is a third class, who are not strong enough to be rebels and whose minds are too fine to let them become brutes—they commit suicide." Mr. Housman's mind was one that revolted; but he had not, like Morris, the temperament or desire to turn him into a rebel. As he was not poor, he did not commit suicide, but hid himself away and turned his mind to other things, hiding from his eyes what he was not strong enough to alter.

If these poems are autobiographical, and they seem to be unquestionably such, that story of frustration rises plainly from them. The last thing I wish to do is to be impertinent to one who is a fine writer as well as probably the greatest living classical scholar, but it seems to me clear that here we have a case where our present industrial system has destroyed, for all practical purposes, one of the finest minds of this century. Capitalism could not use Mr. Housman, so it sterilized him.

The earlier poems (most of those in the later book are of the same date, 1895) tell us of the life of a Shropshire farmer's boy. Externally there is nothing to trouble him but the ordinary troubles which have troubled men for all time; too much drink, and money spent at Ludlow fair, and girls who are loose with the other fellow: nothing very much to attract him but the country-side, the earth and sky, and the occasional passing of a regiment of red coats that suggests far-distant lands and adventures. But all the same, there is the disquiet that all of us feel at some time, and either choke it down or follow it whither it leads. To him it called to the battle, but it gave no hope:

What evil luck so-ever
For me remains in store,
'Tis sure much finer fellows
Have fared much worse before.

So here are things to think on
That ought to make me brave,
As I strap on for fighting
My sword that will not save.

The only thoughts that the call brought to him were thoughts of Thermopylæ, where six hundred Spartans held up the hundred thousands of the Persian King in the narrow pass between sea and moun-

tain, till they were overwhelmed and died, and there was an end:

The King with half the east at heel is marched from
lands of morning;
Their fighters drink the rivers up, their shafts be-
night the air;
And he that stands will die for naught, and home
there's no returning.
The Spartans on the sea-wet rock sat down and
combed their hair.

The attitude of heroic despair, the obstinacy of Thermopylæ, can not last a lifetime. There must be some hope, or if not hope, at least some conviction of the possibility of victory afterwards, maybe after one's death. But Housman never felt this. His poems tell us only of a desire to struggle, an impulse to do the impossible, and a foreknowledge of defeat:

We for a certainty are not the first
Have sat in taverns while the tempest hurled
Their hopeful plans to emptiness, and cursed
Whatever brute and blackguard made the world.

He told us, in the earlier volume, that the Shropshire lad at home had homely comforters; the earth, the standing hills, "the beautiful and deathstruck year," but that it was when he came to the city, to London, that he was helpless, alone and defeated:

Here in London streets I ken
No such helpers, only men;
And these are not in plight to bear,
If they would, another's care. . . .
Undone with misery, all they can
Is to hate their fellow-man;
And till they drop they needs must still
Look at you and wish you ill.

The country boy's longing for the country-side he has left, and his hatred of the town that is breaking him, has given us some of the best of modern songs. To quote one, just for its beauty:

'Tis time, I think, by Wenlock town
The golden broom should blow;
The hawthorn sprinkled up and down
Should charge the land with snow.

Spring will not wait the loiterer's time
Who keeps so long away,
So others wear the broom and climb
The hedgerows heaped with May.

Oh, tarnish late on Wenlock Edge,
Gold that I never see!
Lie long, high snowdrift in the hedge
That will not shower on me!

Nevertheless, this was but the prelude to defeat. Mr. Housman's mind had instinctively turned to defiance of old custom and to the search for truth, in spite of all. It is said that when he delivered his inaugural address on taking up his present post as Professor of Latin at the University of Cambridge, he gave great offence by saying: "It is customary for those in my position to praise the former occupants of this chair. Of my predecessor I said when he was alive that he had only touched the fringe of his subject. I shall not unsay it now that he is dead." But he might insult the Senate of Cambridge University; he could not fight the industrial system of Great Britain. "Man and God" together were too strong for him:

How am I to face the odds
Of man's bedevilment and God's?
I, a stranger and afraid
In a world I never made?

Thence it is an easy descent; from a consciousness of defeat to an abandonment of the struggle. He had

¹ "Last Poems," "A Shropshire Lad," "M. Manili Astronomicon I recensuit A.E.H." A. E. Housman, London; Grant Richards.

expect to be revisited by the continuous excitement under which in the earlier months of 1895 I wrote the greater part of my other book, nor indeed could I well sustain it if it came." It is true. Mr. Housman must now be nearing seventy, and it is twenty-seven years since he laid down his sword. Weapons go rusty in so long a time: the mind that has spent more than a quarter of a century on Manilius can not, if it would, turn to anything else.

R. W. POSTGATE.

WOMEN REVOLUTIONISTS.

MISS STEPHENS has chosen to partition her book¹ according to the "modes and fields of action" participated in by women during five years of the Revolution, from 1789 until 1794 "with some glances before and after." This method is useful for purposes of reference, and as an index to the variety and scope of women's interest during that period; it detracts, however, from the full dramatic quality of the narrative, and as the author herself points out, it necessitates frequent repetition.

Whether as political pamphleteers, *salonnières*, soldiers heading battalions, or club-presidents addressing public assemblies, Miss Stephens shows women to have been an integral and intrepid factor in the Revolution. Was it not de Goncourt who likened them to "*des statues de marbre, qui portent sur leur front serein les vertus de la vieille Rome*"? There is hardly one of these gallant, intense, brilliant, and fiercely or gently heroic women, whether Théroigne de Méricourt, Madame Roland, Olympe de Gouges or the Fernig sisters, towards whom one would not hold out an arresting hand just long enough to inquire a little farther into her history, and draw out some more significant and revealing incident than those recorded. For though Miss Stephens combines a fine sense of the dramatic and picturesque with a mettled and controlled sympathy for the outward aspects of her heroines, she yet lacks that subtle, intellectual, reconnoitering curiosity, that prehensile sophistication and indulgent irony so well exemplified by Mr. Strachey and our own Henry Adams. That she achieves now and then a certain felicity of phrase appears to be rather more accidental than premeditated, as when for instance in describing the oratory of Théroigne de Méricourt, she says "it was extraordinary, audacious, unbridled, overwhelming. It proceeded from a brain packed with the confused and jostling memories of miscellaneous reading from lips on which the French language halted."

Perhaps the most interesting chapters are those in which she writes of "Salons and Salonnières," "Women at Arms," and the "Woman's Party." In each case she presents, in concise and entertaining form, information which should be highly satisfactory to every feminist. The chapter on Charlotte Corday, though of interest to those unfamiliar with her dramatic life adds nothing new to such knowledge of Marat's assassin as is already in existence. Miss Stephens accepts the common belief that Charlotte was Girondist in sympathy and unprompted in her action, a belief hotly and ably contested by Kropotkin.

Miss Stephens is, in fact, never dull and never quite exciting. One might almost say of her as Madame Guizot said of Madame Genlis, one of the women so pleasantly described by Miss Stephens, "*Toujours bien et jamais mieux*." It would have been interesting, for example, to draw a parallel between those French women of 1789 and the women of our own day in the last war. I venture to remark that such a comparison would have shown that any untoward event that precipitates men into great sacrifices and heroic deeds, also precipitates women, and men's need of women's services at such times determines their treatment of them. For, say what one may, necessity is ever the lever by which rights are pried out. In proportion therefore to the diminishment of their actual usefulness, has been the attention accorded to their demands. Nor can one more condemn the men for clinging

so nervously to their immemorial prestige than the women who, deprived of their hard-earned victories, have been content to return meekly acquiescent to their domestic cages. Miss Stephens points out, however, that at least two laws, not unfavourable to women, which had been brought in during the Revolution remained on the French statute-books: the right to divorce and the right to equality of inheritance.

It is to be hoped that some day women will be received into the human race with the same casual nonchalance as men. In the meantime, it is safe to recommend "Women of the French Revolution" to those people who approach history from so isolated and limited an angle. Its title may be added without dishonour to those already brimming reference-files in our great public libraries where the word "woman" leads to so many quaint, humorous, and astounding discoveries.

ALYSE GREGORY.

A PLEA FOR THE DRAMA.

"THE EXEMPLARY THEATRE"¹ is partly a renewed plea for a national theatre which Mr. Barker, in collaboration with William Archer, proposed in a formal "Scheme and Estimates for a National Theatre," published some years ago. The plan is here elucidated and expanded, and apparently unbound by the hope that it may make immediate appeal to some millionaire. Mr. Barker frankly admits that he is castle-building. But he is never unaware that his castle must be a practicable one, and with an almost uncanny keenness he wards off critical objections.

Broadly, the exemplary theatre is to present two sides: the theatre-as-school and the theatre-as-playhouse. The institution is intended for the study of dramatic art as an end in itself; not for the mere production of plays. But the reader's mind is immediately disabused of the idea that the theatre-as-school is an ordinary school of acting, turning out drawing-room elocutionists eager to recite "Curfew Shall Not Ring To-night." It is not to be a school of acting at all; acting and the teaching of acting are expressly forbidden until the latest possible moment. Neither is the theatre-as-school to be a kind of amateur dramatic club. Student productions are to be rare. "Let us sharply beware of too much indulgence in that sort of thing," says Mr. Barker. "It has a specious value. At its best it brings all concerned into too narrow a circle; and by lowering their standard of achievement may, at its worst, cocker them up into a lamentable state of self-sufficiency and conceit. . . . We must not forget that this is the theatre-as-school, and not a school of the theatre operating at large."

What then is specifically the purpose of the theatre-as-school? "Drive these young people, mad to act, and drive them hard, against all the more troublesome parts of the business. Let them break their shins, so to speak, and spoil their strength over voice-production, elocution, dialectics, eurythmics; over the principles of playwriting; upon analytical criticism, theatrical history, the history of costume, costume-designing, scene-designing and making and painting; not to mention fencing and dancing and singing and music generally. These make up the whole art of the theatre, and nothing less, and now the list is not exhausted. And if the young actor does not mean to acquire at least some understanding of the lot, make it clear to him that when he emerges from apprenticeship and comes to occupy his own particular place in any true theatre, he will still be no better than a hand in a factory, his status no more distinguished."

In studying plays, "neither the anatomical methods of the scholar nor the exhibitive standards of the actor" are to be followed. The clash of opinion in class-discussion, intelligently directed—unity in diversity—is expected to reveal the possibilities of the drama studied; and incidentally Mr. Barker is rich in his suggestions for varied methods of approach in the classrooms.

The drama is, however, "as pragmatism as architecture and most effectively preached by practice." The theatre-as-playhouse, then, exemplifies the principles of the theatre-as-school, keeping a repertory of plays ready

¹"Women of the French Revolution." Winifred Stephens. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. \$5.00.

¹"The Exemplary Theatre." Harley Granville-Barker. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. \$2.00.

for the stage "as books are kept to your hand in a library." Discussion such as one might expect only from a man of Mr. Barker's distinguished experience, follows, pregnant with suggestions of organization and personnel, of the rehearsal and bringing to production of a play; best of all, perhaps, of the treatment to be accorded to playwrights whose work is rejected. The co-operative nature of dramatic art, the necessity of collaboration in each section, is everywhere insisted upon.

Some of the details of Mr. Barker's ideal will appear undesirable to certain of his readers; as, for example, a suggested revival of a sort of *commedia dell' arte*. There is something too much, perhaps, of emphasis on the need of racial expressiveness. But the book does not pretend to offer a complete system, nor does it demand absolute acceptance even as far as it goes. The special arrangements of Mr. Barker's own exemplary theatre will, however, from the very authority of their source, interest many. It were a pity if his sound and pithy passages upon a host of related topics, do not interest still more.

RAYMOND A. PRESTON.

AN UNSOUNDED QUANTITY.

ALL discussions might be curtailed, and much time saved, if more attention were given to the premises from which they spring. For this reason readers should consider most closely the preface and first chapter of Mr. McNeil's work¹ on the struggle for self-government in Ireland. In the preface he says that he means to deal with the measures taken to oppose alteration of the Constitution of Ireland rather than with the policy behind them; and in so saying he exposes the weakness of his book. The foundation of all his argument is the right of the British people to decide the fate of Ireland. It is his first assumption, and to him it is axiomatic. If it be so, there is no need of discussion, since self-government for Ireland would be a violation of that British right. But unfortunately the right of the British to decide the fate of Ireland is the very thing that is disputed, and in writing a book in defence of Unionism, the author acknowledges it as such. Therefore to present a defeat of Home Rule in a general election as evidence of the justice of unionism, is to present what is irrelevant. Decisions of the British electorate may be collected *ad infinitum* without establishing their right in the matter any more clearly than decisions of naval officers establish our right to occupy Haiti and Santo Domingo. When he shows how the Home Rule Bill of 1914 was passed without having been submitted to the people, as constitutional changes usually are, he simply shows that "responsible" Governments are not responsible to the people.

In discussing Ulster's standpoint, he admits that the Irish difficulties can be understood only by those who take pains to get at the true motives underlying them; but he himself is not of those. He neglects the motive for the hostility of Protestant Ulster, and to do so is to neglect the gist of the matter. He should remember that another Ulster Protestant, "Æ," has seen that there is an economic basis to the conflict; and he should undertake to answer these words of Michael O'Hara in St. John Ervine's "Mixed Marriage":

A' tell ye, Mr. Rainey, the employers have used religion to throw dust in wur eyes. 'They're eggin' us on to fight one another over religion, so's we shan't have time til think about the rotten wages they give us. They set the Cathliks agin the Prodesans an' the Prodesans agin the Cathliks, so's ye can't get the two to work thegither fur the good o' their class.

The impartial critic desires to see the relation between bigotry and economics thoroughly discussed, because history shows that bigotry too frequently has an economic-political origin; and Mr. McNeil himself admits that religious animosity is strong only in times of political stress.

This book is simply a partisan record of a political squabble. It is an attack upon the Liberal party and upon

democratic tendencies; not, as its title would suggest, a work on the justice of unionism, the benefits to be derived from it, and the heroic struggle for it. When, in mentioning the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, Mr. McNeil says that it simply recognized the partition which history made long ago, he is inverting things. It is not history that makes partitions, but partitions that make history. Interests of one kind or another make partitions; and what the interests are, and why they make the partitions, it is the duty of the historian to expose. Mr. McNeil prefers to fulminate against an Irish Parliament and to say that it would be controlled by "influences." That all legislatures are controlled by influences is evident to anybody who has studied political government; but that any particular legislature should be condemned for being no exception to the rule, is foolish. Mr. McNeil does not seem to realize that the cure does not lie in the preservation of government by a legislature that is quite as subject to influences as the proposed body, though the influences be different, but rather in such change of government as will minimize its political aspect. He grows angry with those in favour of Home Rule because he believes that since the Act of Union is a statute of the United Kingdom, only a majority of the United Kingdom can repeal it. Such a belief fails to consider how the act was passed, and how it has been received by the preponderant majority of those affected by it.

When he comes to the contemplated armed resistance to the will of Parliament, he is somewhat embarrassed; but he gets out of his difficulty. The will of Parliament is only "technical legal authority" when it favours Home Rule, but something entirely different when it opposes it. Indeed his defence of the drilling and arming of the Ulster Volunteers as being in harmony with constitutionalism and "law and order" resembles a defence of the extra-legal process of hiring gunmen in West Virginia. When he attempts to justify rebellion on the part of Ulster, he virtually admits that justification of rebellion lies only in success, that the "test resolves itself into a matter of personal partisanship." Yet he is bitter in his denunciation of nationalists because they desire separation, and calls such a desire treason.

There are other contradictions, and they throw more light on the Irish question than anything in the book. He wisely notes that separation is the essential aim of nationalism, and sets in contrast to it the "loyalty" of the Unionists; but hardly has he done so, when he becomes bitter in his allusions to the inability of Englishmen to understand Ireland and the Irish, and eager in an exposition of the fundamental difference between Ireland and England. No Republican could be more lucid, and few would be more fervent. The cause of the outburst is his attitude towards the Home Rule Bill of 1914, for Mr. McNeil is more of a Carsonite than a true Britisher. His eulogy of Carson contains some unintentionally funny bits. He admits that the present Lord Duncairn is not an Ulsterman, that he was in Parliament not as the result of a popular election, but as the representative of the University of Dublin; yet he thinks him fit to speak for Ireland in general and Ulster in particular. He lauds him for his unselfishness and his willingness to suffer great personal sacrifice in taking the leadership of the Ulster party; and then shows how, oddly enough, great personal gain resulted from the unselfishness and the sacrifice. But this humour is a slip, so one must not be irreverent. Unfortunately Mr. McNeil's mind is one of those which have learned nothing from the war or from the exposure of its origins. Since it is impossible for any idea of change to enter into such a water-tight compartment, it is not surprising that he can not see any good for Ireland or for England in Irish self-government.

Mr. Ewart's work² takes up the story in the spring of 1921. It bears the imprimatur of the Under Secretary of State for India, so one may judge of its bias; but the book is interesting and worth reading. It is not, as is "Ulster's Stand for Union" the history of a political con-

¹ "Ulster's Stand for Union." Ronald McNeil. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. \$5.00.

² "A Journey in Ireland." Wilfrid Ewart. New York: D. Appleton & Company. \$2.00.

test; but rather, as its name implies, a series of sketches of various parts of Ireland and a collection of the opinions of Irishmen of different political affiliations. He sets himself a difficult task; for he tries to be fair, and yet tries to justify England's conduct in all respects. He says that the word of an English officer can not be doubted, and gives it as a guarantee of the reliability of rather flimsy testimony; yet while he takes that attitude, one can not but feel that his heart is somehow with the Republicans. He tries to select comments that will lead his readers to a conclusion in favour of England; but he is not a born propagandist, and sometimes defeats his own purpose. The chapter on the Southern Unionists is an example. The speeches are not consistent, and in a few instances end by revealing what they are supposed to hide. His entire handling of quotations is odd. Nearly all that favour English conduct of affairs are without any indication of their authorship. They are worthless as evidence, for there is nothing to prevent our concluding that he is simply putting quotation-marks around his own opinions. In many instances they read like the words of the illustrious "one high in the Government" who figures so prominently in newspaper-reports. With the remarks in favour of a republic, or adverse to English control, the case is different. We not only have the name of the author, but he is frequently a well-known personage. Moreover, Mr. McNeil sometimes takes pains to give us an interesting pen-picture of the author, as of "Æ," Barry Egan and Liamon de Roiste.

When he comes to Ulster, he seems to find less to interest him, and adds little to the characterization of the "loyal" Irishman found in Shaw's preface to "John Bull's Other Island." He makes a comparison between Sir Dawson Bates and Liamon de Roiste, and says "Bates and de Roiste are extremes, totally at variance. Sir Dawson has no words to spare, no moments outside of business." He speaks and looks and thinks and is—Bel-fast. In de Roiste there are reserves of irony, intelligence, fertility. De Roiste is an unsounded quantity." Perhaps these words explain the true cause of the trouble between England and Republican Ireland. The English imperialist does not desire at his door a nation led by men who are "an unsounded quantity."

Quite a different kind of work is that of Mr. Gerrie.¹ He says in his preface that much of it was written without any intention of putting it into print, and one wonders what unsound advice caused him to change his intention. It is a vulgar attempt to handle a serious question, and is without evidence of any knowledge of history or of ability to interpret history. Occasionally there is an effort to entertain the reader with comic-supplement humour, one example of which will serve to show the nature of the author's mind: "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet," and the odour of Limburger is not impaired by a change in nomenclature."

That an adult could write such a book is a marvel; that a publisher should be found for it is an insult to American intelligence. JOSEPH L. TYNAN.

SHORTER NOTICES.

THERE is no scarcity of books for children, but there is a great scarcity of genuine literature in this field; and even those, like Robert Louis Stevenson, whose minds have been as good as their intentions, have done little to fill the void. It is no wonder that children turn away from the flaccid prose in which the myths of the Greeks and the Norse peoples have been told, and find pleasure and excitement in the mechanical adventures which have now taken the place of the goody-good tales that delighted, or were meant to delight, our grandparents. This is why one welcomes Mr. Padraic Colum's latest volume of Greek fables, called "The Golden Fleece, and the Heroes Who Lived Before Achilles."² Mr. Colum's prose is simple, friendly and delightful to the ear. He loves and respects the classic stories, and his English keeps just the faint archaism which lingers like must about an ancient jar; a happy medium between matter-of-fact language and

the overstressed simplicity of the Butcher and Lang translation of the Odyssey. These tales look out upon a horizon that lies far beyond the here and now, and I can testify from experience with a group of lively children, all below the age of fourteen, that Mr. Colum's manner and material are calculated to carry them towards that horizon. Since Hawthorne, I can think of no one who has done this peculiar service to Greek and English literature, and to those who are destined to enter into the heritage of those literatures. L. C. M.

"FOUR AND TWENTY MINDS"¹ is not, as those familiar with Papini may think at first blush, a translation of his "24 Cervelli"; it employs that title to cover twenty-four studies selected by the translator, Professor E. H. Wilkins of the University of Chicago, from those three highly diverting volumes, "24 Cervelli," "Stroncature" (Slashings) and "Testimonianze" (Testimonies). Up to the time of his "Storia di Cristo," Papini was the *enfant terrible* of Italian letters, a swashbuckler of the arts and sciences. He has the true essayist's gift of discussing everything in terms of his own personality; even his life of Christ is as instructive about himself as about the subject. He is unrivalled in Italy for a sharp tongue that pierces like a lance to the core of his theme; he has a gift of paradox, of vivid image, of stimulating phrase. He is a natural psychologist. His intellectual restlessness, so effectively portrayed in that strangest of cerebral autobiographies which he calls "Un Uomo Finito," is mirrored not only in his kaleidoscopic career through the "isms," but in the diversity of the men and ages that have appealed to him. The present selection, besides being put into excellent English, has been well made, and those who are waiting for the appearance of Dorothy Canfield's version of Papini's "Christ," could do nothing better than to read "Four and Twenty Minds," as an introduction to the man who returned to Christ after having begun with Mephistopheles. Papini is here particularly happy with such subjects as Walt Whitman, Dante, Spencer, Nietzsche; only rarely, as in his piece upon Remy de Gourmont, does the breath of journalism blow across the pages, although, as in the case of Gourmont's own series of "Promenades," these essays owe their origin to the various periodicals with which Papini has been connected. In brief, this is a diversified, entertaining, illuminating volume, introducing adequately one of the most interesting mentalities in contemporary Europe. I. G.

DR. WILLIAM MACDONALD'S "Reconstruction in France"² might be summarized as an excellent description of how much easier it is to blow a civilization to pieces than to put it together again. Prior to 1914, Dr. MacDonald points out, "no Government had ever committed itself to the proposition that losses occasioned by war were to be reimbursed by the State as a matter of right, or that financial responsibility attached to a whole people for making good the injuries which a part of the people had suffered." Whether the French would have assumed it had it not been for their hope of recovering damages from Germany, is a question into which it would not be charitable to inquire. Once undertaken the work went forward with fair success, although there were, and still are, striking exceptions. A few areas were neglected altogether; in some cases individuals, especially peasant farmers, were provided for when important industrial interests were ignored; temporary structures were allowed to remain even when their condition became a menace to the health of those compelled to live in them; and so on. Many peculiarly French difficulties were encountered, such as the aversion of the inhabitants to "the geometrical regularity and architectural sameness which characterize many American cities." But progress has been steady, and in January of the present year, when Dr. MacDonald wrote his final paragraphs, it was already possible to say that "the devastated zone may be likened in appearance to a great building which, long in process of construction, is at last nearing completion." As the devastated area covered some 12,884 square miles, or about the area of Massachusetts and Connecticut combined, of which at least half required extensive labour to recover for cultivation or inhabitation, the achievement is by no means small. Dr. MacDonald's account of the successive steps in reconstruction is carefully organized and documented, and should prove useful to students, as well as to general readers who are willing to take pains to find out what modern war does to a country. Incidentally one may acquire a new respect for certain qualities of industry, resourcefulness and self-reliance which may be found in the French people. R.L.D.

¹"Ireland's Woes and Britain's Wiles." Andrew Gerrie. Boston: The Stratford Company. \$2.00.

²"The Golden Fleece and the Heroes Who Lived Before Achilles." Padraic Colum; illustrated by Willy Pogany. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.00.

¹"Four and Twenty Minds." Giovanni Papini. Selected and Translated by Ernest Hatch Wilkins. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell. \$2.50.

²"Reconstruction in France." William MacDonald. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

More bay-leaves.

The Freeman as a teacher.
WHEN I attended — Institute last summer, Professor —, who taught economics, told us that if we wish to continue our studies in economics after we leave school, we should read the *Freeman*. Accordingly I send you a check for a yearly subscription. The above mentioned Institute is in Chicago.
New Orleans, Louisiana. H. L. M.

Hopeful for us in a crisis.
FOR the enclosed \$1.00 please send the *Freeman* to —, Leavenworth, Kansas. He is one of the men our country is punishing for being honest. I'm poor but a dollar more or less matters nothing when one hasn't enough anyway.

I do not agree with the *Freeman* entirely. I think the whole profit-system will have to go in order to build up another civilization, but I read the *Freeman* because the clever way in which it exposes the sore spots in our economic order always provokes me to laughter.

Then, too, I have a sneaking idea that should the crisis between the masters and the slaves come in our generation that at least some of the *Freeman* bunch would be on the right side.
Duluth, Minnesota. B. Van H.

Joy to civilized readers.
I ENCLOSE check for renewal of my subscription to the *Freeman*, which expired last week. I do this, in a way, unwillingly, as I had not expected to renew. The reason I am doing so is because you have made it practically impossible for me to do without it.

I take, and read regularly, at least a score of publications, some serious and some frivolous, and I have found difficulty in keeping up with them, and had decided to allow my subscription to some of them to lapse.

I have just received the *Freeman* for 13 September, and two articles in it, which are all I have read so far, were sufficient to cause me to change my decision with reference to the *Freeman* at least.

I refer to "Current Comment," and "In Durance Vile." I am sorry that you do not sign the matter written by the editorial staff, as I should like to know the author of the last named contribution especially. It is a bit of writing that should certainly bring joy to any civilized reader.
Shiner, Texas. H. H. H.

Appreciated in the Orient.
MY subscription for the coming year is due, but I can not send it until about 1 October. Teachers are always poor in September. In the meantime, don't leave me out, for I should miss you too much. I like all the delightful liberties you take with all our long-established notions, and I am following with particular interest your articles that deal with the new orientation in education.

By the way, you ought to have Mr. Lincoln Colcord's "Conversation in a Garden" printed separately for wide distribution. The new appreciation of the Orient is one of the most hopeful signs I see of the dawning of a truer estimate of ourselves. My *Freeman* goes to Japan regularly, where it is much appreciated.
St. Louis, Missouri. E. C. B.

SIR THOMAS MORE concluded a letter written from the Tower in these words:

*And thus fare ye hartely
well for lacke of paper.*

In our day there is an abundance of paper, there are typewriting and typesetting machines, printing presses of magic attainments, and devices for girdling the earth in almost no time. How do these serve us, and how far in advance of the famous utopist who had to curtail his message "for lacke of paper" have they brought us in our thinking?

The FREEMAN hails progress, discovery and invention, and it encourages the tendency of the modern mind towards still higher flights. Nevertheless it perceives in the hurried *tempo* which the agitated world develops, a need to lay emphasis on sober (not solemn) thinking. Conceive, if possible, how the history of the world would read to-day if leaders among men had used their brains for only ten years!

Predicated on the belief that a few hundred thousand English-speaking people want a periodical that "mixes its paint with brains," the FREEMAN entered the field. Its success is an indelible chapter in American journalism. It found immediate acceptance and its subscription list discloses a steady growth.

A few months ago the FREEMAN asked its readers to assist in doubling its circulation by Christmas but, though the response was enthusiastic, the desired goal has not yet been attained. There is a way in which you can help: give subscriptions to the FREEMAN as your holiday tokens. If you want to spend one, three or six dollars on a friend who likes to associate with thinking people, ally him with the FREEMAN. You need but send us the order and we will tell the recipient that the subscription is your gift.

This is the week: if you are one of the thousands who have expressed gratitude for the FREEMAN, make this the banner week of its career.

Fare ye hartely well!

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